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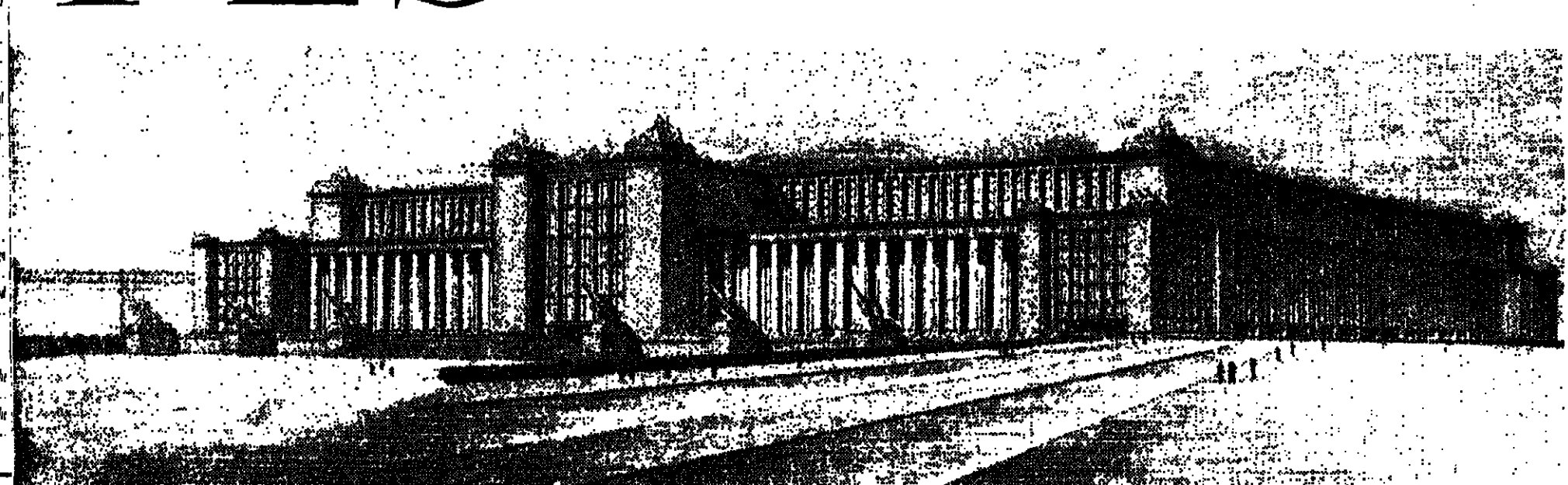
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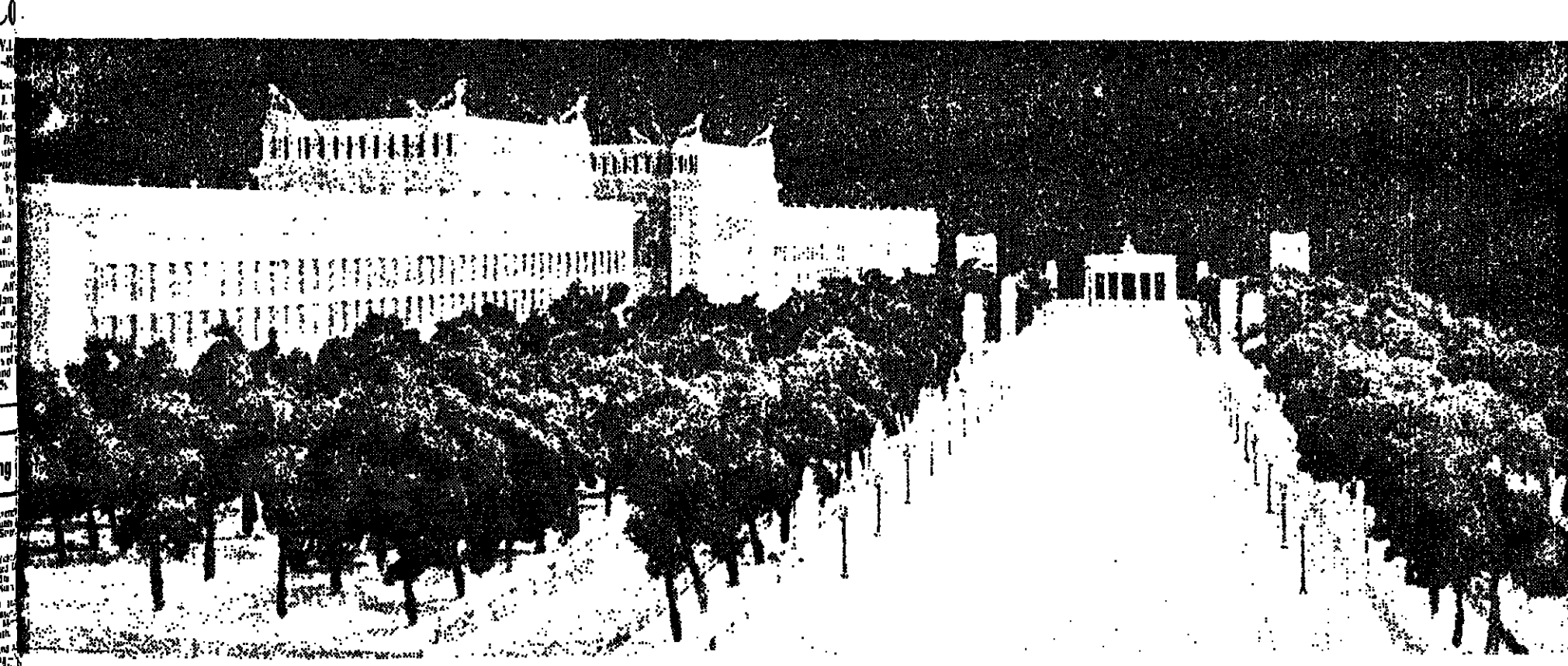
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THE TIMES LITERARY SUPPLEMENT

THURSDAY 16 OCTOBER 1969 • No. 3,529 • ONE SHILLING AND SIXPENCE



HITLER AND HIS ARCHITECT



Two of Albert Speer's designs—a sketch for the Berlin Südbahnhof (top), and a model for the Reich Chancellery (bottom).

HOW WAS it possible? has by now become a traditional question, and here at last is the final answer: Albert Speer's memoirs. Born in Mannheim in 1905, he was the son of a man of letters, his German teacher at school read the *Frankfurter Zeitung* to his pupils. Speer was just old enough to be strongly influenced by the cultural developments of the 20s. From 1925 to 1927 he studied architecture, the profession of his father and grandfather, at the Technische Hochschule in Berlin-Charlottenburg; he qualified on the day of the great depression with no prospect of work except a teaching post. It was in 1931 that his students founded him to attend a meeting at which Hitler was speaking. The speaker, excellent in his sense of the occasion, and the young Speer succumbed to his fascination—which, he is honest enough to admit, possessed him as long as Hitler lived, though repelled by a speech of ebullience at the same time—while aware of them—believe-

me. Looking back he ruefully searches for explanations, finding one in the German heritage of the impersonal discipline of the old *Obrigkeitsstaat* intensified by four years of war. The Weimar Republic had had neither time nor strength to supplant this pressure. Quite by chance, when he had in fact intended to go on holiday, Speer was commissioned by the Party to rebuild the Nazi Gauhaus in Berlin:

for he considered what he regarded as the squalor in which Weimar Chancellors had lived as fit for them—since they changed all the time—but not for him. He saw Speer for the first time in Munich and approved the thirty-metre-wide eagle which Speer had designed for the next Party rally at Nuremberg—as he himself says, it was like a giant butte, utterly flattered for display by a superhuman collector. It was arranged that Speer should be responsible

for the rebuilding of the Chancellor's house: After years of vain endeavour I was filled with a desire for action and twenty-eight years old. For a great building I had sold my soul, like Faust. I had now found my Mephisto. He seemed, no less captivating than Goethe's. The pact was indeed fatal. Hitler was of course fascinated by architecture, and he turned out to have the same strange facility for memorizing facts about it as for military details. Architecture, like military power, was inseparable from his conception of political power and his passion for it. His megalomania was to be expressed in brick and concrete, and, like the temples of the Greeks, to stand for centuries after him. He chose Speer for his youth as well as his efficiency, for he felt sure that Speer would outlive him. Speer thinks that the Nazi Party organizers would never have sent him to Hitler alone, had they known the significance of architecture for the Führer. For twelve years, with only some erratic doubts towards the end, there was to be a special, highly emotional relationship between Speer and Hitler. Speer felt that he had only to

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE

	Page
A new history of England	1175
Neoplatonism and astronauts	1176
Three pages of fiction	1176, 1177 & 1215
Houdini	1183
Commentary on the Dajnton evidence	1184
Race relations in Britain	1209
Bertrand Russell and Wittgenstein	1212

10/16/69

seem to have minded Hitler's rage over Niemöller in 1937, when the Führer ordered that this recalcitrant clergyman should be sent to a concentration camp and never again released. Only when he found bookshelves in Papen's office where Herbert von Bose had been murdered on June 30, 1934, did Speer avoid that room in future: "It concerned me no further." Since then he has accepted twenty years' imprisonment as fitting penance.

It is interesting to find that Speer's account of Hitler and his Nazis, although he should in those days have seen them at their best, is odious and nothing else; they turn out to have been vulgar, corrupt, coarse, and cruel. They nearly always behaved disagreeably to one another. Their jokes were always at someone else's expense, or at the expense of decent behaviour. Going as described by Speer seems even more grotesque, Goebbels even more ruthless, than one had believed possible. Speer disliked Bormann from the beginning; Papen is not in evidence. The one irreproachable character is the unfortunate Eva Braun, who appears on the scene as Hitler's mistress earlier than has been generally supposed. Speer also liked Funk and the unhappy wife of Goebbels; later, he found Seyss-Inquart agreeable.

Speer's description of Adolf Hitler himself is probably the most accurate there will be; here and there it is possibly too indulgent, implying that the Führer did not wish "the worst." It reveals nothing unexpected but substantiates what was known. Hitler was without human warmth or compassion; Speer does not feel that even his attachment to Eva Braun had any depth. Again and again the narrative shows that Hitler lacked humour as he lacked humanity; he could laugh till he cried at a nasty practical joke—at the expense of his one-time friend Hanfstaengl, for instance. This unfortunate man was told that he would be deposited in Republican Spain after an aeroplane to which he had been ordered had taken off. After long delay in the air he was brought home.

Speer himself aroused in Hitler a certain excitement on account of his technical accomplishment in the architectural glorification of the Führer and his power. Speer always indicates Hitler's taste as rather like that of Wilhelm II—in whose reign, though not under his rule, Hitler grew up. The new Reich Chancellery built by Speer was to have dimensions deliberately intended to intimidate foreign diplomats and minor potentates: it was completed in wild haste between January, 1938, and January, 1939. The vast fortress at the centre of Berlin with which Speer was to have followed this up was to be more extensive than the

Champs-Élysées, and to dwarf the whole of history. At its crest an eagle was to grasp the globe in its claws. Only with the greatest reluctance did Hitler allow the world war he launched to cheat him of this monument to his own ruthlessness.

Defenders of Hitler have liked to claim that his more wicked plans were only evolved with the deterioration of his health from about 1938 onwards. About this Speer's opinion is in no way suspect. Hitler's health already began to break down in 1935, he writes, but Speer is convinced that his plans and aims never changed at all, that he always intended to establish a racial hierarchy by barbarous methods. It only became completely clear during the war how little pity he felt for his own nation; the Germans were precious to Hitler only as the instruments of his power. He showed no interest in the housing of the people, only in the building of monstrous memorials to himself. His Gauleiters, as far as they were able, followed his example. Thus work was created in Nazi Germany not only by the manufacture of armaments, but also by the architectural ambitions of the Führer and the Party leaders.

Speer, who was very industrious, was baffled, so long as peace was precariously preserved, by Hitler's laziness. Hitler boasted how he had foiled his bureaucrats by simply not reading the papers they placed on his desk; he said this gave him more time to think. Later, the hard work of the war years further impaired his health. Speer also makes it clear that, despite the occasional magnetic outburst and apart from his genuine though tasteless interest in architecture, Hitler was in fact a profound bore. This is demonstrated once again by the endlessly banal assertions, the constant repetitions in inferior films and operettas. It is not without interest that in spite of their special relationship, Speer found nothing better in conversations with Hitler than others have recorded. It is clear that Speer, who genuinely loved music, felt that Hitler's devotion to Wagner's music and his family was essentially one of his poses; required, as he believed, to bolster his prestige.

Speer emphasizes the extent to which Hitler kept his underlings in separate compartments, uninformed about one another. This made it possible for so many of them to claim that they had not known what was going on. Speer admits that his own reaction to the pogrom of November, 1938, the *Kristallnacht*, was merely that of the cold technician: it disturbed him to see so much disorder.

I did not see that more was broken

than some glass, that on this night Hitler had crossed his fourth Rubicon of the year. . . . Did I for one swift moment realize that something had begun that would end with the destruction of a part of our people, something that changed my own moral substance? I do not know.

This was just two months before he completed the Reich Chancellery. With the outbreak of war the technician's isolation became denied. Even the enthusiastic architect with his respectable background felt convinced that building for public or private glory must be shelved in the interests of the war effort. Far from sharing this attitude, Hitler for a long time had no intention of making any such sacrifice—in this case he seems to have underrated the risk of losing popularity. If this was the Führer's attitude, Göring and the Gauleiters were unlikely to show more public spirit. Speer's evidence here is of extreme historical importance. He makes plain that Hitler whatever Goebbels might announce, did not think in terms of total warfare until very late, and that Hitler had not intended to make war because he did not prepare for an all-out effort. Now Speer's narrative makes it palpably clear that Hitler intended to make war all the time, but that he thought in his dilettante way that a campaign could always be launched ad hoc, like a sudden storm on a stage. This gamble was marvellously successful in France in 1940, but it became more and more disastrous on the Russian front.

Early in 1942 Speer himself—now in charge of buildings for the army and the air force—travelled to Dnepropetrovsk to supervise the repair of railway communications wrecked by snow; he experienced at first hand the appalling difficulties encountered on the *Ostfront* by the ill-prepared German troops. On his way back Speer called for the first time at Hitler's East Prussian headquarters at Rastenburg. He was to have flown on to Berlin with Todt but found himself too tired to do so; as fate would have it Todt's plane crashed and he was killed. He had been Minister for transport, armaments and munitions; he was not a Party man but a conscientious technician for whom Speer had felt great sympathy. To the fury of Göring, who tried to pounce upon Todt's functions as belonging to the Four-Year Plan, Hitler promptly appointed Speer to succeed Todt in all his activities. Speer protested in vain.

In this case at least Hitler's flair was justified, and Speer will go down in history as the man who succeeded in greatly expanding arms production in wartime Germany in increasingly difficult circumstances.

He himself continued to dream of his future as the conqueror's architect; but in fact his relationship to Hitler now changed and there were signs that the magical relationship would one day become threadbare. Speer had noted the ways of the despot—oriental style—when the messengers who had brought the news of Hess's defection were arrested. He became more critical of Hitler's methods and attitude, though he personally enjoyed great independence and made the most of it.

The rest of Speer's narrative is grouped around three topics: his attempts to introduce something like a total war effort, the Stauffenberg incident, and the struggle over the "scorched earth" issue. The Nazi Party continued to oppose an all-out war policy and persistently blocked Speer's attempts to mobilize German women in industry; it preferred that foreign slaves should work for German women in their homes as well. On October 10, 1943, Speer, addressing the Gauleiters and other Party leaders, demanded that of the six million Germans still employed in consumer goods factories, one and a half million should be transferred to armaments and the manufacture of consumer goods apportioned to France. He also had trouble with the Gauleiters when he tried to restore historic churches or castles after air raids, since the Nazi leaders were happy enough to let them go—there would be all the more reason to build their own monuments afterwards. After air attacks Hitler himself always wanted to restore destroyed theatres and reopen them at once; he would not believe from Speer that the effect upon morale of neglecting more essential restoration might be worse. One marvels that it took all those years to defeat Hitler.

On July 30, 1944, Speer was invited to lunch at the German War Office in the Bendlerstrasse by General Fromm. He might have witnessed what happened there had he not refused the invitation on account of a meeting with important officials at the Ministry of Propaganda. After the news of the explosion at Rastenburg Goebbels demanded the presence of Speer, possibly to keep an eye on him. Thus Speer was a witness of Goebbels's behaviour on that day and of Himmler's elusiveness about which Goebbels pointedly complained. Speer's position was already so delicate that earlier in the year there had been an attempt to murder him in a hospital under S.S. control. Though not in their confidence, he seemed on good terms with Stauffenberg and his friends and—as Heydrich's successor, Kaltenbrunner, informed him—he had been put down tentatively as their Minister for Armaments. When he went to visit Hitler in East Prussia,

on July 21, the Führer cool; but somehow not made to pay any price on the day after the utterly triumphant about-treaters. Without a right he had been to be kept the traitors under the Gauleiters were saying detached standpoint of different cultures had been theirs, their accounts were still aligned on Hitler's side.

Speer is best known for his role in Hitler's civilization in their own times. Orders once the Führer had decided to admit defeat. He but underneath were the everlasting gle to resist Hitler's Britain might have troubles, such as Ireland, or India, or unemployment, which he could have done. It is motivated entirely by historical Much of this story Speer's curiosity. He contributes hardly so his trial at Nuremberg: it much as a grain to that other twenty years in which to pose which historians have sometimes prison, and another two saved: the provision and extension against his former documents of a national myth.

Before a consideration of the peculiar interest such a book is likely to hold for British readers, there should be some discussion of its scope and manner. The years down to 1960 are world domination. Though dealt with fairly briefly, the skeletons and my energy I had ston of the eighteenth century is there, longed it. The great dome hardly the flesh. Then the stroke with my eagle grasping the fountains and we are carried, in what to have been more than a metaphor must be a quarter of a million words. I knew that France was to be down to 1967. Appendixes explain, and Belgium, Holland and by with a high degree of accuracy, those Russians were to lose their system and the organization of the had Hitler ever concealed his Church of England and of the Courts of Law. The reader will learn how to address the younger sons of dukes.

Dazzled as he had been for though he will be mistaken in gathering Speer at his trial pointed "George cannot be awarded to appalling dangers of a dictatorship which exploits the most

The whole is written in an easy, lively style and bears the unmistakable impress of a single powerful mind. The only occasional Americanism to detract from the readability is the use of "in Commons," presumably a reference to the House of Commons, but by analogy with "in Congress." The personal tragedy was that the method of presentation is extremely emotional reaction to the skillful. Using four different powers little Austrian who had no of heading—parts, chapters, sections, substance, only an occasional three pages—Professor Webb ad and a lust for power and its advances, his story rather like the sion through sheer massive tide. At one moment progress seems architecture. The others were likely to leave some ground unoccupied, but sure enough, a few pages later the omission is made good during the onward flow of some other topic, and perhaps carried to a point a little beyond the tide-mark so far reached by its predecessor. This is done so systematically that a strong sense of historical continuity is imparted.

There are omissions. Professor Webb has little to say about Scotland, even during the golden age of Edinburgh at the end of the eighteenth century, though he says much about Ireland. The evolution of cabinet government is barely touched upon, and a good deal more could have been said about the changes in the structure of the Civil Service associated with Sir Warren Fisher. But on the whole there are very few gaps of a traditional kind, and it is with particular interest that one notes what about the 1950s and 1960s. Professor Webb shrinks from any specific judgment on Winston Churchill, but CND is here; so are Miss Christine Keeler and her consequences, and *Beyond the Fringe*—a group of young and sometimes amusing satirists.

Now that complacent pride is out of fashion there are two tones of voice which an historian usually chooses as he reaches modern times. One is to strike the note of troubled liberalism, the other—which was adopted by Mr. A. J. P. Taylor—is a ringing challenge to the future. Professor Webb discards them both. He faces a story of the transformation of a differential into a collectivist society, with its peak of achievement in the vigorous entrepreneurial Britain of the 1830s. Hence the steady emphasis placed on the reforms of the last quarter of the eighteenth century.

A translation of Albert Speer's book will be published by Weidenfeld and Nicolson in 1970.

The Young Turks
THE COMMITTEE OF UNION AND PROGRESS IN TURKISH POLITICS 1908-1918
Feroz Ahmad

This is the first book on the Young Turk revolution based on extensive use of Turkish as well as Western sources. The period it examines is the outbreak of the revolution in Turkey's entry into the First World War, is one of the most active in modern Turkish history. 50/- net

British Policy in Malay Peninsula and Archipelago 1824-1871
Nicholas Tarling

A history of British policy towards various political forces in the Malay world. This is a corrected and revised edition of an earlier book first published in 1957. It contains a new introduction and maps. 75/- net. Oxford University Press.

The Usurpation of Richard the Third
DOMINICUS MANICINUS AD ANGELUM CATONEM DE OCCUPATIONE REGNI ANGLIE PER RICCARDUM TERCIVM LIBELLVS
TRANSLATED BY C. A. J. Armstrong

The Italian, Dominic Mancinus, was in England in 1483 and wrote this tract for the information of his patron, Angelo Cafo, Archbishop of Vienna. The Latin text is published here with a translation, introduction, and notes. Second edition. 14/- net.

Capital and Growth
Sir John Hicks

This is a paper-covered reprint of Sir John Hicks's comparative study of methods of dynamic economics, first published in 1965 (38/- net). 23 text figures. Paper covers. 18/- net.

The Philosophy of Mathematics
Jaakko Hintikka

The papers brought together in this collection lay more than usual emphasis on the mathematical basis of the philosophy of mathematics. This is essential, in the editor's view, to the relevance and usefulness of philosophical work in this field. Paper covers. 14/- net. Oxford Readings in Philosophy.

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Oxford University Press

From the New World

W. R. K. Webb: *Modern England*. 652pp. Allen and Unwin. £3 10s. (paperback, 40s.).

Enough has been said to show that in chronicling the facts—and this book is packed with facts—Professor Webb does not flinch from interpretation. Many of his interpretations are brilliant and refreshing, such as the aside just quoted on the Reform Bill of 1832 or his summary of the background to trade union development in the later Victorian age: "New problems, raised expectations, stirred consciences, and continuing misery." With others some might disagree, for instance the verdict on Gladstone as "a personality utterly alien to our age"; while the description of Lord Harrington in 1885 as "leader of the renegade Whigs" is surely either unjust or anachronistic. It is possible to regard Harrington as a Whig but if so his opposition to Home Rule was a reversion to Whiggism, not a reneging of it.

Surprisingly, Professor Webb is rather weak on English education. Jowett finds no place in this book; neither does Lord Robbins. The development of technical education, and the immense expansion of higher education associated with the latter name, are not mentioned in the context of the early 1900s, from which quotation has already been made. And there are one or two plain errors in this area. Thus W. G. Ward is incorrectly categorized as "a journalist", and it is very far from being the case that "engineering has not normally been the business of British universities".

Empire, which is the most surprising, and from the point of view of world history among the most important parts of the story, forms the weakest part of Professor Webb's book. If, as he penetratingly says, the English have never fully understood nationalism, the Americans have never fully understood imperialism. The account of India, especially after the Mutiny, is notably inadequate—from the error of saying Meerut is near Simla to the unqualified view that from 1857 onwards "the British" had lost respect for, and generosity toward, men (the Indians) whom they no longer believed amenable to civilization or to ultimate self-government. The reaction immediately after the Mutiny was indeed of this kind—and worse; but it is far from being the whole truth about ninety years of I.C.S. rule. Nor, which is perhaps more important still, does Professor Webb allow much for the reciprocal effect of India and the Empire on attitudes in late Victorian and Edwardian England, though he shrewdly points out that the decay of the Imperial bond was masked by the collaboration of the overseas empire in Britain's quarrel in two world wars.

But taken as a whole we have here a sane, detached, refreshing and comprehensive history of modern Britain. It will certainly not warm the Englishman's heart with the thought that the British are not as other nations; rather it will deprive him of the comforting argument, always within British reach, that things have always seemed bad, and "there is a deal of ruin in a nation". The book will be closed with an uncomfortable feeling that, whatever the next chapter may be, the whole story is not quite so important as it was, and that Britain is now, as it were, caught in the slipstream of the urban civilization she was the first to create.

For the historian there may be a different feeling again. So objective a book, describing the rise and decline of a great European nation, raises the question whether the concept of national history itself is not itself becoming outworn. Professor Webb writes still in the traditional framework of national history, but when the national illusion begins to fade, its usefulness as a category for historical study declines. Or perhaps in future a national history will be one of the luxuries that only the very largest nations will be able to afford.

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Cambridge University Press

Language games, squibs and knots peak-in

LAURENCE LERNER. *Selves*. Unnumbered pages. Routledge and Kegan Paul. 21s.

D. M. BLACK. *The Educators*. 59pp. ANTHONY HOWELL. *Inside the Castle*. 59pp. Barrie and Jenkins. 16s. each.

Arranged in reverse of their ideal order, the first two sections of Mr. Lerner's new book, *Selves*, reveal an accomplished ordinariness followed by some really extraordinary language games. The third section is an ambitious long poem ("In his old age Ibn Battuta, living in his native city of Tangier, dictated, at the command of the sultan of Morocco, an account of all his travels") for which it is hard to care, though admiration for its painstaking piling-up of detail comes readily enough—poems in this style nowadays seem to have collective access to an Art

Department that Flecker would have envied.

It is the central section of *Selves* that counts for most: fourteen poems, the majority of them with preoccupations about ways of talking. The first of them, "The Merman", by concentrating on the depth-structure (no pun intended: it really is a post-Chomsky idea of communication difficulty) of a sea creature's language, manages to add something new to the theme of a landed water-breather. The conceit is worked out at length and with a startling sympathy for the problems of what is only a figment after all, and a dangerously twice one at that.

When humans talk they spit their say in bits
And bit by bit they step on what they feel.
They talk in bits, they never talk in all.
So live in wetness swimming they call "sea";
And stand on dry and watch the wet waves call

They still call "sea".
Only their waves don't call

The story of the merman's painful sojourn is neatly rounded, the hopelessly earthy-minimal way he thinks is subtly put across, and the whole poem is a minor triumph of witty innocence.

Other poems in the section (partly titled "Address to the tooth of a whale and to an unborn child") are similarly excellent. There is a quality of imagination at work here which is ultimately more engaging, and really more informative, than the ruthless domestic reportage of the first section, which contains poems separated only by their superior verve from the standard Ladies' Home Tension poetry of today. The poet gets fat and middle-aged, the lady is rent by the agonies of childbirth: the reader can't help thinking that there are quicker ways to get dead

and messier and more ways to get torn up.

With much public comment now—recent books on English teaching have been pretty predictable, not to mention repetitive. Affairs. We have

The battle and looking to know rather too well the launched this year is to be a low cost, but it can't be the standard of the only because it brings a new emphasis. Mr. D. M. Black the subject.

poems in *The Educators*, new emphasis, he it noted: tricky arranged and by Stuart is a Freudian, and it is strictly fillets for significant—to put it politely—that magazines. In *Inside the Castle*, who has been very active in the appeal of a neighbourhood for some years Ransom at his knottish, Mr. Stuart's work is, however, something there are a teacher and his pupils. This central problem in "English", one that has attracted less attention than it merits. The activities of king, reading and writing are in-ly personal, and so can only ish within a relatively intimate ionship between teacher and l; but will not the necessary in-ment of such a relationship itself done. Since then he has po- by pupils of a teacher's own atti- and a second collection of and habits of thought? The *chameleon aus alter Zeit* is real, and in principle in-der exist Person. Judge, Mr. Stuart has at least number of poems he's com- it for discussion, and that is tributing to magazines, which, even if his own methods of able to look forward to it to appear more than a lection soon. The present odd.

Ulmer Breitspieler is most they appear nevertheless to have produced with coloured led. The most valuable part of by Peer Wolfram which book undoubtedly consists of the well the playful "primary poems in question.

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WEST: Words for a Deaf Daugh-
187pp. Gollancz. 30s.

icious words. Desperate, radiant, mitable words. Mr. West's inter was two years old, a blonde, some, well-grown child before parents noticed anything unusual of her. When the experts had done their testing they used terms like "in damage", "middle brain age", "nerve deafness", "ism", "dyslexia" and others, es reporting eighty-decibel hear-ess, with total deafness in the left and grossly impaired hearing in right. Briefly, a doubly handi-child.

taller and mother preferred word "exceptional". After the instinctive reaction, this did not deny the handicap, but, so was possible, sharing it, search- the motive behind the compul- seemingly irrational behaviour or the compensating gifts and- that might—should—must-essed by a child who was lack- hearing (and so speech) and- tional intellect. It meant pro- a treasure-house of sensations of taste, smell, touch. In prac- tins it meant running the house a child (when this book was she was seven) who was elec- energetic, who could be noisy-structive and uncontrollable- at best, had her own highly- ver pattern of behaviour. There- ver a hope of gracious living- the phrase is interpreted- usually, a good deal of their

time. Mandy's parents were bruised and breathless and short of sleep.

With what result? There have been two results. With a home whose aim is to "try like mad to maximise what ever [she] has, which is like fitting a hearing-aid to [her] whole life" and the loving skill and patience of a school for deaf children where she is a day pupil reinforcing each other, Mandy has learnt to recognize and use a number of words, written and spoken. More importantly, she has gained in gregariousness and sociable behaviour—like holding hands or kissing her parents spontaneously. "There is always an advance going on: you change and change and change, outstripping these words even as I set them down", notes her father. For himself and his wife, new dimensions of life have opened as they have approached it from previously undreamed of viewpoints.

Mr. West does not minimize the cost of it all. He does not try to gloss over the thoughts of the future, which cannot always be stilled, or the way in which the "normal" world reacts to the abnormal. Almost the only strangers who took Mandy's sometimes bizarre public behaviour in their stride were those who were themselves deaf. There was one exception. "An oldish man in a very expensive, hand-stitched suit" gave her a friendly pat on the head. He was a pediatrician. But this is a triumphant book. It is an incidental bonus that the author, a visiting Professor of English at Pennsylvania State University, is a poet and novelist.

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Poetry with a human face

RUUDOLF HAGELSTANGE: *Der Krak in Prag*. 57pp. Hamburg: Hoffmann und Campe. DM 6.

REINER KUNZE: *Sensible Wege*. 99pp. Hamburg: Rowohlt. DM 10.

PAUL GERHARD HÜBSCH: *mach was du willst*. 62pp. Neuwied: Luchterhand. DM 8.80.

CHRISTA REINIG: *Schwalbe von Olevano*. PETER O. CHOTJEWITZ: *Ulmer Breitspieler*. 42pp. each. Stiersdorf im Taunus: Eremiten-Press. DM 8.80 each.

Rudolf Hagelstange began writing in 1931: he made his name with the sonnet-cycle *Venezianisches Credo* which was printed in Verona and appeared on Hitler's birthday, April 20, 1945—the day on which the Nazi hierarchy held its last full meeting. The underlying theme of this notable opposition work, couched in the most characteristic poetic form of that time, is freedom and human dignity—those very qualities which Russian imperialism has been seeking to suppress in Czechoslovakia. It was perhaps inevitable that Hagelstange would react to the invasion of Czechoslovakia since all his work is informed by his love of freedom and he is at his best as a *Zeitdichter*. His *Ballade vom verschütteten Leben* was unique in being a long narrative poem on a topical theme, though in this case what the poet believed to be fact turned out to be fiction; this hardly affects the poem, for, as Max Frisch has said, "We (writers) cannot demonstrate the truth, we must invent it", and the only real question is whether Hagelstange could have invented his theme if rumour had not done so for him. His collected poems appeared in 1961 under the title *Lied der Jahre*.

His new poetic work, *Der Krak in Prag*, was written in Milet (Dalmatia), as much humanist ground as Venice itself. Poet and theme are well matched, for if it is anything, humanism is what the Czechs have been and are seeking to defend. *Der Krak in Prag* is, of course, a satire; the subtitle, *Ein Frühlingmärchen*, points straight back to that other satire published by the same house in 1847 and—greatest irony—much admired by Karl Marx: Heine's *Deutschland; Ein Wintermärchen*. But behind Hagelstange's satire, as behind Heine's, lies that other age of political absolutism and consequent satire: the seventeenth century. The allusions to the age of the Thirty Years War which are implicit in the syntax and diction of numerous lines of Hagelstange's poem are appropriate since the "red ogre" was doing in 1968 what the "brown ogre" had done just thirty years before: the last section of chapter two contains a tragic farce allusion to Andreas Gryphius's poem "Tilge den Vater-

landes" on the rape of his hometown not many miles to the north some three hundred years previously.

Der Krak in Prag will be welcomed by admirers of Hagelstange's post-war *Zeitdichtungen*, but is unlikely to add to their number, for the formalized treatment—the heroic diction, the no less old-fashioned rhyme-patterns—belongs more to 1945 than to 1969. The rape of Prague is perhaps a theme for a younger and more personally involved poet, a poet like Reiner Kunze.

Reiner Kunze is a new East German poet. Born in 1933, he was forced to abandon an academic career; after an unsettled period, he has lived by his writing since 1962—which cannot have been easy. Last year he was awarded the "Preis für Nachdichtungen" of the Czechoslovak Writers' Union. *Sensible Wege*—published in West Germany—is his first collection. It consists of variations (and there is considerable variety here) on a single theme: the desire for communication. One thinks of Paul Celan's definition of poetry as a message-in-a-bottle. Most of Kunze's messages-in-a-bottle (or perhaps *Kassiber* would be the right word) are allegorical, consisting of thinly veiled attacks on the lack of freedom in his country.

Brecht's famous observation that "a conversation about trees is almost a crime because it involves keeping silent about so many misdeeds" also comes to mind, for the word "verschweigen" is a leitmotiv of Kunze's collection. The section "Hunger nach der Welt" shows his longing for a place where it would not be necessary to keep quiet about so much and where normal human communication (compare Brecht's "Freundlichkeit") would be possible, a place to which he clearly considers his wife's native Czechoslovakia to approximate much more closely than his own benighted country. He wants "Welt", a place of golden bridges where the candle of hope burns brightly and where the individual human being can live unoppressed by silence, censorship, and worse. He comes across in these poems as a writer of great courage and sincerity. And although his admiration for Heinrich Mann and Peter Huchel (for instance) is not concealed, he writes in a plain, unadorned style that is very much his own.

Paul-Gerhard Hübsch, editor of the pop-orientated magazine *Idun* and founder of a beat-group, is a well-known "underground" figure whose poems have appeared in many little magazines and several anthologies in the past few years; *mach was du willst* is his first collection in book form. Born in 1946, Hübsch belongs to the demo-generation and writes accordingly: for him what matters are the problems of the present and

the art-forms of the present: his work shows little awareness of the past, "bewußt!" or otherwise, or of poetry written before his own lifetime. Though he belongs very much to the avant-garde, his work is not really experimental, for he uses a familiar collage-plus-folk-song technique. The obvious poetic influences on his work are Hans Magnus Enzensberger (*mach was du willst*) and the strongly reminiscent of Enzensberger's *veredelung der welt*, and shares many of the strengths and weaknesses of that collection) and recent American poetry, particularly of the "beat generation"; but non-literary influences are also evident—Bob Dylan, the Beatles, Pop art, &c.

Much of his work has political implications, not because he is in any real sense a political poet, but because for his generation as a whole political commitment is as natural as sexual freedom. It would be easy to denounce *mach was du willst*, but in fact it is not only powerful but surprisingly poetic; it has more character than most first collections. If his book is likely to appeal most strongly to readers of his own age group and to those familiar with the beatnik-folk world of which he writes, Hübsch is certainly an interesting and disciplined writer whose first book of poems is: ganz hübsch.

The tendency for poetry to appear in inexpensive paperback form continues (of the volumes under review, only Kunze's is in hardback), and new paperback series continue to appear. Most welcome is the new "Brotschur" series published by Verlag Eremiten-Press, each volume being illustrated. The first five include poetry by Christa Reinig and Peter Chotjewitz—both strongly individualistic poets who none the less have not a little in common.

Christa Reinig's work was the subject of a review here on March 20, 1969. To her recent volumes of zodiacal stories and poetic grotesques she has now added a new collection of poems. *Schwalbe von Olevano* contains only twenty-three poems, but in other respects it will not disappoint admirers of her work. Half the new poems are epigrams; the rest vary from plain political allegories to (mostly longer) poems which are densely imaginative. The style varies from robust vernacular to a kind of self-generating rhetoric that is reminiscent of Baroque poetry; the characteristic verbal muscularity and irony are again in evidence. Christa Reinig's poems are often too concentrated and subtle to be immediately striking; they work slowly, and improve with keeping. Though slim, this is a vintage collection.

Peter Chotjewitz's *Ulmer Breitspieler* is a reprint of his first book of poems, which came out in 1965 in a limited edition and therefore attracted

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Commentary

The Principal Documentary Evidence submitted to the National Libraries Committee incorporates the testimony of ten principal library institutions, five government departments, forty-three universities, twenty-two other university institutes, colleges, and schools, fifty-eight committees and other organizations, and twelve industrial concerns, as well as twenty personal statements; it appears in two volumes comprising 721 printed pages and some forty charts, diagrams, and graphs; the page measures 11½ by 8½ in., and a foot-run of shelving the fact is not irrelevant) could accommodate seven copies, unbound provided it could sustain a weight of a tonne over 32 lb. avoidtups. The price is £22 10s. (H.M. Stationery Office). For this sum the purchaser will acquire not only the opinions of a great variety of wise and respectable authorities but also such an abundance of egregiously misprints as to cast doubts upon the authenticity of some of the more obscurely expressed passages of the evidence even if they have in fact been accurately printed. For instance, did the U—y of S—e really receive a maverick copy of the Dainton questionnaire in which the words "recorded as efficient" appeared as "recorded as efficient"?

The Evidence is of interest not only for what is contained in it but also for what is omitted from it: omitted either because those who made submissions did not want to labour the obvious or because they were not asked the right questions. Thus a frequently heard criticism of the Report is that it looks at library use largely through the eyes of the scientist, and shows inadequate understanding of how the advanced worker in the humanities handles his research in libraries. Now that the Evidence is available it can be seen that those did not explain in full detail how such research is carried on in libraries. Clearly they did not do so because they thought that to give such an explanation to a National Libraries Committee was unnecessary and would be otiose. It can now be seen that only one organization (Evidence) thought it necessary to point out that the preservation of copies of all books in their original form in a national reference library is an essential requirement for future study of the history of typography, binding, paper-making, ink-production, water-marks and so on, and that in the general absence of such evidence the Report was ready to recommend throwing away original copies and replacing them by microfilms. On the other hand there is ample testimony in the Evidence to the importance of manuscripts, archives and public records to the work of many scholars so there is little excuse for the way they are virtually ignored in the Report. Those who are not chairmen of large commercial enterprises, publishers, or professors of chemistry, economic history, or the history of line art but simply librarians, will willingly acknowledge the magnitude of the Dainton Committee's labours in consulting and assembling so many frequently conflicting opinions on the complex problems they were asked

to solve. At the same time many will retain doubts about the validity of the Committee's assessment and interpretation of some of the evidence before it, and indeed doubts also about its general understanding of what the business of national libraries really is. A perusal of the Evidence shows that the most eminent witnesses — including the British Academy and the Royal Society — support the concept of a unified or, at least, interdependent body of knowledge which it is the duty of librarians to organize, make available, and produce, and from which no part can be detached without some degree of damage to the whole; a perusal of the Report on the other hand suggests that the Committee's over-riding concept is rather of a vast expanse of information from which it is the duty of librarians to snip such portions as the customer or his computer can identify as meeting his requirements. The difference in approach, nicely pointed up by Professor George Whalley of Ontario in one of the statements appended to the evidence of the British Museum's Trustees, is crucial, and from it and from the neglect of such evidence flow the two most controversial and dangerous of the Committee's recommendations.

The first is the recommendation that the National Reference Library of Science and Invention be detached from the British Museum Library and administered as a separate unit within a national libraries system. This is a matter about which the Trustees, to judge from their evidence, are particularly sensitive, for it is not to be supposed that persons of their standing would write without reason and without provocation of "dirt from the blocked drains of the Whitehall ministries" rubbing oil on the institution which, they claim, "has been vainly trying to remove the blockage" (Evidence) — a miserable story of official ineptitude, procrastination, and double-talk of which there is no hint in the two paragraphs decorously headed "Background" in the Report. Nor is it clear that the Committee has got its facts altogether right. Was the British Museum "given responsibility" for the Patent Office Library in 1960, as the Report states, or was it, as the Trustees state (Evidence), made responsible in that year for the NRI project, taking over the POI in April, 1966? Does the readership survey printed as Appendix B of the Report refer only to the Holborn Division of the NRI, as stated in its heading, or does it refer to the whole NRI, as is stated in paragraphs 76 and 300 of the Report and in the introductory paragraph of that Appendix? Could it indeed possibly be used to give a clear picture of the whole NRI, since the NRI is still in its infancy as a going concern? Could it, for example, be properly used to establish distinctions between patterns of usage in the British Museum Library and the NRI? Under what particular stones did the Committee look in its search for interdisciplinary students? On what evidence does the Report say that the buy-water collections "consist largely of older material", when four-fifths of their stock was in fact published later than 1950? Why does the Report conclude that "the

evidence points to a regional role for the NRI, as far as general scientific reference facilities are concerned" when the Evidence shows in detail that it is the "most heavily used science library in the country" and that "the total use of NRI is still less than the Holborn Division" alone? These questions and others demand investigation and must be answered.

The second of the Committee's most dangerous recommendations is that material for which there is a low level of user demand (or, as some would say, material which readers do not wish to consult frequently) should be sent away to purpose-built "out-houses" (with accommodation for readers) so situated that it can, if necessary, be transferred to the "central reference point" within twenty-four hours, a condition which, as the Civil Aviation Division of the Board of Trade will sooner or later point out, might conceivably be more easily met by Anguilla or the Seychelles than by Bodmin, Attleborough, or Llandrindod Wells. The arguments advanced by the Committee in favour of out-housing are wholly based on financial considerations. Purpose-built library accommodation in central London, the Report (Appendix D) states, costs £5 per sq. ft. a year the same order of cost, it should be noted, as office accommodation for the Department of Education and Science; by comparing storage costs in central London with those at Boston Spa, the Committee reaches the comfortable conclusion that if only 5 per cent of the BML's holdings could be sent into low-cost exile, the grateful nation would be saved a sum equivalent to its annual Acquisitions Grant, excluding the NRI's grant so pitifully small that it appears otherwise to have escaped the Committee's notice entirely. In this way the Trustees' own plans are comprehensively hit for six, the Committee having first called "no ball" after the manner of the Dilly as described by Andrew Lang:

I am the batsman and the bat,
I am the bowler and the ball,
I am the umpire, the pavilion cat,
The roller, pitch, and stumps, and all.

Moreover, the Committee's calculations seem sadly superficial. Does not out-housing itself involve substantial costs which should be taken into account? And are the basic assumptions of the Committee's calculations valid? The problem is not only a matter of how much shelving can be reasonably concentrated in a given area, but of how many volumes can on average be recommended in concentrated shelving areas provided. The Committee's figures are clearly based on an assumption that the books of a national reference library would average no more than five volumes a linear foot of shelving. The Evidence volumes give no support for this view, but the annual reports of the Bodleian Library and Cambridge University Library, which have similar holdings, provide statistics showing an average of not five but between twelve and fifteen volumes a foot. Why should the metropolitan linear foot be expected to hold only five volumes when the provincial foot is twice or thrice as capacious for the same material? Have costings based on such fallacious basis any validity? These questions again must be unanswered.

Some may care to challenge as well the basic philosophy of out-housing. Is it not the common experience of librarians (as expressed in Evidence) that out-housing is wasteful, frustrating, and inefficient, and is it not the common experience of scholars that books lightly used in one generation may be heavily used in the next? What will happen when in this crowded island some future Minister of Technology discovers that the only base for his own high-cost vertical take-off jumbo-jet is already occupied by the National Repository for Blank Diaries and the Lost Books of Livy? How much time will high-cost professors be allowed to consume in journeys to low-cost areas before the Department of Education and Science claps its declared policy of maximum utilization of student-instructor time, personal Grade A? In any event, is it not time that someone boldly said that the complete National

Reference Library should, of principle, be considered important to the life of the capital, like the House of Commons or Buckingham Palace?

Similar economic arguments deployed in order to demand (for which there is no support in the Evidence) for national loan collections, and periodicals in the past. Such things, the Committee too expensive and must be in the interests of other directly related to the national well-being to subject to be fair, the Committee, less well qualified to consider Committee on the National Library Well-being would be association booklist and is used by several consider its national librarianship to describe sections of their catalogues. Reluctance has been described as occurring in teenagers who have the ability to solve many problems (such as the positive union catalogues), it seems, with no inclination to read imaginatively: an attitude widely deplored by educationists. In fact the author coined no or a combine-harvester as a phrase and described nothing novel to those already working with teenagers in library classrooms. What he did was to write with and negative general opinion and conviction about his own Report, and the experiences, criticize nearly everyone else pressing statements, submerging in the same field and compile some Evidence. For example, interesting book lists. The book is admirably of the British Museum, produced on excellent paper. The type face is for no little implied class and the layout, with wide margins, Report, submitted the lost attractive. The author has arranged his constructive comment in a rather under four headings. Part One, "The

The Trustees cannot believe in the Red," after describing his own national interest is well served by experiences goes on to assess what teenagers the basic tools of knowledge and do not read, including magazines, ment, while immense sums of money are spent on books, teachers and librarians may find the national libraries, the BML, decided irritating. They will could have been provided a sent the implication that here is a new leader offer facilities to scholars, me to encourage them in a cause they have workers and readers of all ages fighting for years. Mr. Chambers has quality that would be caught, he has had experience with difficult facilities in the United States. The very beginning of his book he relates

Contrast this with the pathos he pushed a stubborn non-reader into eluding paragraph of telling him what he did read out of school, which proclaims the "Cory boy, with a grin", produced one of hope of improving library's James Bond books. London teachers half a million pounds each, that Philip did not reveal a copy of Oz Equally striking is the way that some paperback on sexual deviation, failure to strike the intermediate. How new is this problem of the reluctant tation of the British Museum, indeed why has it been so much discussed? and the numerous emphatically indeed was it considered important enough in the Evidence to its high Pergamon Press to launch this book? national status. It is, in fact, must date back at least to the beginning of to have obtained no written photos taken at the turn of the century — rows National Libraries in other parts of the world, one of them must have rebelled against visit to America and France, education and many of them must have about other national libraries another contrast — the different between the defeatist policy mended for the BML in foreign accessions (Report) vigorous government-sponsored grammes of acquisition Library of Congress and other can research libraries under of the Higher Education and under Public Law 400, a saddening experience for scholars to see British vision slipping rapidly and irretrievably behind that American libraries can offer more saddening to see that ton Committee either point contrast or were unaware of If the Dainton Committee point prevails in these times spite the evidence and the which was too obvious to evidence, clearly the human find themselves placed at the end of the queue (Report 229) on the general principle humanities can wait (and plain) while the sciences do. This principle should tioned by our legislators Humpty Dumpty is the wall.

TLS

THE TIMES LITERARY SUPPLEMENT CHILDREN'S BOOKS

THURSDAY 16 OCTOBER 1969

Horses to the water

BY CECILIA GORDON

those days there would have been more parental pressure to acquire book learning, since previous generations had not had universal free schooling. Perhaps teachers in pre-1944 Act elementary schools were reconciled to the fact that many of their pupils would never be readers and did not consider it disastrous? Maybe with the advent of the comprehensive school, grammar school teachers have been dragged out of their cosy environment and into contact with secondary modern pupils, some of whom cannot read, and others who can but don't want to. Shocked at what they have discovered, these articulate middle-class teachers have rushed into print and on to platforms, com-

omission is because Mr. Chambers finds "no value in reading for reading's sake" and condemns the reading of comics as "a habit which reaches the level of sickness". This is in the first half of the book. Later on he condemns a teacher who reacts violently against comics and would advise him to grow up, learn to "contain his prejudices and temper" and offer his pupils Hergé's Tintin books. This is the kind of circular talk and contradiction that weakens the argument throughout the book. Incidentally, while there is nothing intrinsically wrong with Tintin, anyone who tries to lure a reluctant reader with these books will find they are leading the way

Conference in 1966. Miss Paulin was President of the Library Association and you can't get much more authoritative than that. Whose side is Mr. Chambers on?

Secondly, Mr. Chambers advocates selling books in libraries, not only to bring people into libraries but also because he considers book-selling in this country to be in "a shabby state". This suggestion is unlikely to elicit cries of horror, even to librarians aware of the legal and practical difficulties. Librarians are not quite the professional snobs Mr. Chambers suggests, but they are bound by by-laws, they are often limited by cramped, old-fashioned buildings, and they are mostly overworked. Swedish libraries have bookshops and coffee bars and are "overrun with teenagers". Bully for the Swedes. But whoever said British librarians were against this? Lincoln Public Library already manages something on these lines. In fact, many school libraries do run paperback book clubs and do sell books by arrangement with local booksellers. This should please Mr. Chambers, who recommends one of these book clubs to what he calls "the reluctant teacher". But as he disparages bookshops, which, he says, eventually lose their novelty and are ignored, why does he want them in libraries? Thirdly, having devoted a whole book to proving that there are not enough suitable books to persuade teenagers to read, Mr. Chambers condemns librarians for not providing suitable and attractive places to put books for teenagers because "with more and more being published the problem becomes more and more acute".

Librarians, according to Mr. Chambers, are not sufficiently aware of the fact that they serve only 40 per cent of the population. The figures are his own and do not bear examination, whichever side he is on. At the beginning of the book he says that he reckons 60 per cent are reluctant readers and says that he has not "a hope of establishing this as a scientifically proven fact". But he goes on using the ratio of 60 to 40 per cent throughout the book; 60 per cent of what? It is like 3d. off; 3d. off what? Nowhere is it made clear whether this is 60 per cent of teenagers or of the whole population. At the beginning of the book it seems to be teenagers, but by the time we get to Chapter 8, "The Reluctant Librarian", it is "of the population". In point of fact, the Library Association recognizes no national figures of library users. Figures are kept locally, but as there is no common basis for recording them there is no valid uniformity. In the opinion of the Library Association, and also of Library Schools, the figure is some-

ALSO IN THIS INSET			
Ann Thwaite on the Exeter Conference	1186		
Over Nines 1187-90-98, 1202-03		History ..	1194-95, 1204-05
Poetry: Biography .. 1188-89		Picture Books ..	1196-97
Anthologies 1192		Older Girls ..	1199
Under Nines .. 1193, 1200-01		Non-fiction ..	1206-07

—with reviews of *Horn Book Reflections* (1205), collections of poems by Christina Rossetti (1188) and Charles Causley (1189), new novels by John Rowe Fowles and Penelope Farmer (1190), Jill Paton Walsh, Geraldine Symons and Joan G. Robinson (1187), Hester Burton (1195), and K. M. Peyton (1199).

vinced that those who do not read for pleasure are missing something vital out of life.

A great deal of Mr. Chambers's argument is based on the quite valid assumption that most teachers and librarians are middle-class and find it hard to believe that there is a large chunk of the population to whom the printed word means virtually nothing. Too few public librarians realize that the child who comes into a library is already committed to reading and is by no means typical. Probably only school librarians are aware how few young people read because they really want to, and how thin on the ground are the books available to tempt today's teenagers.

Mr. Chambers does not mention Lord Northcliffe who popularized the penny press and required his writers to write for readers with a reading age of 12. This is a more realistic attitude to reluctant readers than that found in many a classroom and library. The tradition is carried on today in the *Daily Mirror*, which is widely read by young people. Perhaps this

up a cul-de-sac, or, to change the metaphor, to an addition as unbreakable as what Mr. Chambers calls "the Blyton Neurosis".

The criticisms of librarians will be hailed with delight by some, but they are based on subjective reactions and unsubstantiated statistics. Early in the book comes the statement that many ideas "should be old hat to librarians and libraries yet they are ideas which meet with cries of horror and polite noises of denunciation". What are these ideas? Sifting through remarks about hush and rubber floors and the expressions on people's faces as they look at books, one finds three positive suggestions, none of which is calculated to disrupt the library profession. One, that paperbacks should be stocked in libraries. More and more school libraries do this, and regard paperbacks as expendable, to be read and replaced when worn out. As for public libraries, Mr. Chambers himself quotes Miss Paulin's enthusiastic advocacy of paperbacks to lure young people into a library in her address to the Library Association Annual

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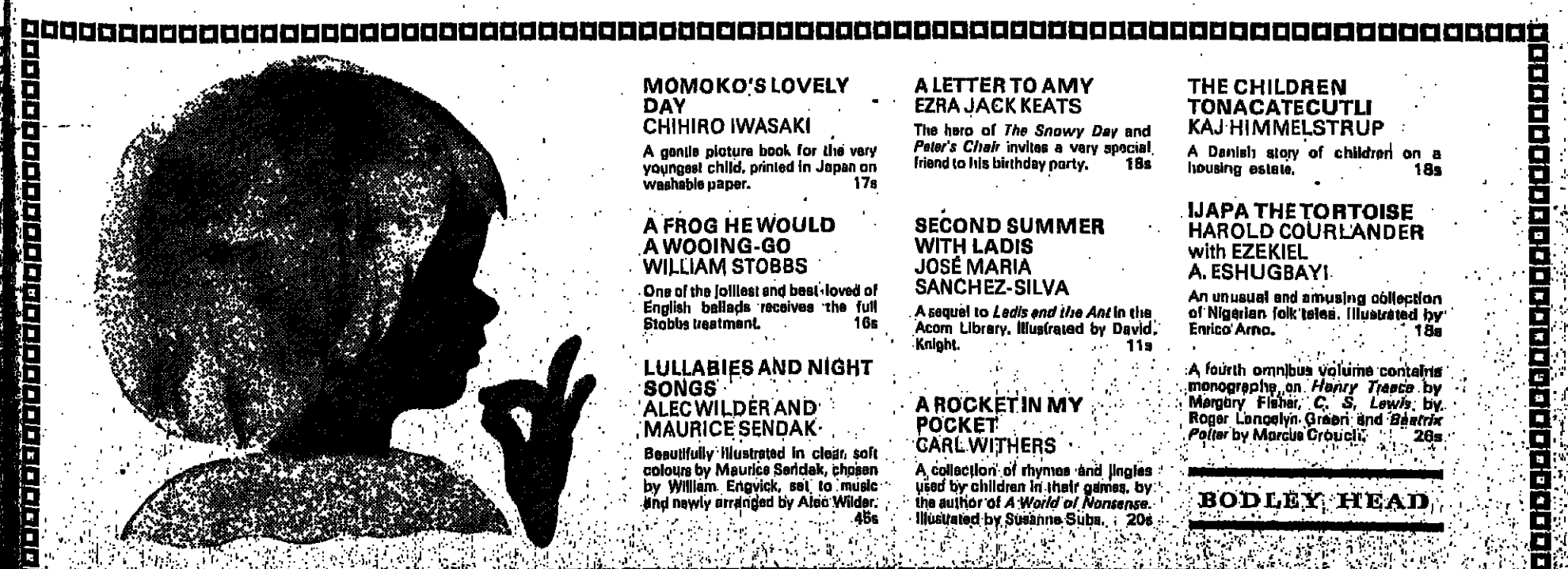
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Who is Asterix for?

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'They are, I am assured by numerous young people, screamingly funny... clearly the artist, authors and translators have hit a vein of childish humour inaccessible to adults.' Richard Condit in the *Daily Telegraph*

On the other hand —

'The editor of Antiquity has long been an admirer of Asterix... he knows that at least three Professors of Archaeology in Britain share his admiration, and in his book, *The Druids*, Professor Stuart Piggott, long an Asterix fan, says "The whole series shows a real knowledge of the Gaulish scene which enriches the comedy for prehistorians." *Antiquity*

To which one might add —

'My kids like the books, and I like them liking them!' John Coleman in the *New Statesman*

'Bobo conquered, and endured: and I shall bet and hope that Asterix does the same.' Geoffrey Gimson in *Country Life*

How are the books being used?

The original French editions with their leaflets of explanatory notes are an essential part of the modern language section of any library, and of imaginative French teaching at all stages beyond O-level. Not only is the language that which pupils and students will meet in France today, but these are the actual books which are talked about in virtually every French home.

There are three main reasons why today's librarians and language teachers should greet Asterix with even more enthusiasm than their predecessors showed for another simple-hearted "bretteur sans vergogne", Cupid Haddock of *Tintin*. First, the books are really funny and artist co-operate brilliantly to combine historical accuracy of background with outrageous anachronism of thought and speech. Secondly, the text offers sharper colloquial French than a bookroom of readers and the puns and allusions that wink from every page will do more to develop a sense of language than terms of blackboard etymology. Thirdly, Asterix and his companions have become the object of such widespread cult in France that familiarity with their exploits and idiom helps form a stronger link between French and English than the ephemeral influence of a generation of pop stars. Hugh Shetley in the *School Librarian*

continued on facing page

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where between 25 and 33 per cent of the whole population.

Many people in fact use the library intermittently throughout their lives. It is this fluidity of use, and also the difficulty of recording the relationship between the number of people who use a library and the number of books read, that makes it very unwise to base opinions of library use on statistics, let alone on figures which are emotional rather than statistical.

Much of the book is devoted to the author's opinions of individual books and magazines. Here he is on safe ground. Many will disagree with him, but he has clearly done a lot of hard work and reading. Where he is more vulnerable is on the subject of books written especially for teenagers and particularly paperback series. In the chapter, "The Reluctant Publisher", not only is he critical of series like *Armada* and *Merlin*, which consist largely of cheap reprints of authors children already like (Blyton, Saville, Johns, etc.) and only a few original titles, but he also condemns series which reprint what he calls "second-rate competent novels". *Peacocks* come under fire for this. A glance down the *Peacock* list reveals that all are competent and second-rate. Many of the titles for older readers are books which no teenager would ever read in their original hardback, but which they will accept and read in paperback.

Mr. Chambers is not happy with the idea of tempting teenagers to read adult books. It savours for him too much of cast-offs and to be a "second-rate way of doing the job." However, one of his five booklists is an innocuous list of adult books for young people and his list of "Five Star Books" which excite an immediate response includes fourteen adult books among thirty-two named titles. The list of paperback series does not

include Cane's fets, which are absolutely first class with teenagers, but these are included in the *Five Star List* and are mentioned kindly in the text. All the other paperback series are condemned one way or another, except *Pan Macmillan Topliners*. Mr. Chambers is the editor of this series which is specifically intended for adolescents. This enterprise is admirable in intention if one can believe all Mr. Chambers and the publishers say. There are only four reprints out of a current sixteen titles and there is a good balance between boys' and girls' interests. However, the most successful titles are those by established favourites, E. W. Hodder and Joan Tate. The others are providing only a qualified success.

Books are needed for teenagers, badly needed, but it is questionable whether the best way to get a teenager to read a book is to label it "for you". Equally questionable, for another reason, is another solution Mr. Chambers seems to advocate in this chapter, "The Reluctant Publisher". He says book publishers have not "kept up with new track of the growth in teenage social behaviour and needs." He contrasts them with the disc men, Carboys, Street, TV and radio, and deplors the lack of advertising that would make books a part of everyday living. It is becoming increasingly evident that the teenage cult is as much a money-spinner for middle-aged speculators as a real social phenomenon, so perhaps it is as well that publishers are on the whole a conservative and cautious lot where books for children and young people are concerned.

Having attacked teachers, publishers and librarians for their inadequacies in dealing with the reluctant readers, Mr. Chambers is now hoping to lead them against a

common enemy, "multimedia". He was in America this week, was not pleased to find the "media" centres. The *World of August* 1989, complaining that a child is likely to be handed a disc, a tape and a video, but a school library is a source of material which is not going to be applied. Quite the contrary, the current thinking in world is in favour of books. The surprise is more at the attitude from that expressed in a chapter of *The Reluctant Publisher* where we find this statement: "The use of books as teaching by every teacher of every age, but thought as to which is the best instrument by which to hand has helped us to a point where books are disliked and worn out."

However, Mr. Chambers is now to convince a printed word is in disrepute. In the current *Children's Book News*, he is asked in an American one of Beatrice Potter's book, given a pair of headlines, "No doubt the film strip, no doubt the audio tape, no doubt the video, no doubt the computer, no doubt the modern media, reproductive, does a child translate the image may deplore this, but it is reality. Most satisfy themselves really prove that the properly with reading about it."

ADAM CHAMBERS: *The Reader*, Penguin Books, 08101 5067 41.

Running away



From *The Workhouse Child*

been so very domestically capable. Perhaps none of this matters, in the end; at the climax in particular the intensity of writing and atmosphere carries one through triumphantly. Here is Bill watching Julie dug out from a ruined building.

A face of stone. Plaster crushed to powder covered her hair and skin. Her hair was stiff, grey. A grainy texture like weathered marble covered her cheeks; her lashes were loaded with dust, thickened by it, as though she had been fretted from the coarse substance of stone.

The Workhouse Child has familiar elements from earlier stories by Geraldine Symons: an Edwardian setting; Pansy and Atlanta as main characters; a mistaken interest in the possibilities of hay-or-straw-sticks for sleeping in; the rescue of a poor child from persecution by horrible adults—and perhaps a slight excess of benevolent ones in the denouement. It, too, like its predecessor, is enormously civilized, perceptive and entertaining, with an effortless sense of period, and a style and wit to shame many an adult novel. Moreover, thanks to the publisher, the production and layout make it a pleasure to handle. The illustrations are almost distinguished though a trifle over-fond of dots.

Pansy runs away here, from the villainous overseers of a seaside workhouse, having generously but rashly changed clothes with Leah, one of her charges, so that Leah, too, can bathe. There is an almost Jane Eyre intensity in Pansy's encounter with this charming pair; a chilling subsequent attempt to hide herself in a butcher's shop.

The butcher's cheeks were meaty with little red veins; they had a raw look. He had a brown moustache waxed into points. His hair was snarled sideways across his forehead as though it was glued there.

We do not meet Matron and Longnose, the workhouse pair, again. Their downfall, the rescue of Leah, is largely carried offstage, and Pansy is driven on not by Longnose himself, but by her fear of him. This is very nice in itself, yet Pansy's terrors are rather than their all too real originals and the story seems smaller in the end than it has promised to be. Perhaps it is partly that, beautifully delineated as the characters are, they do not grow much. Atlanta, the junior Bohemian, remains coolly in command, Pansy's imagination remains as deliciously literal—

Self-seeking

CATHERINE STORR: *Puss and Cat*, illustrated by Carolyn Dinan. Faber and Faber. 16s. (571.09143.1)

Like all books by this able storyteller, *Puss and Cat*—on the surface a brisk and lively tale for seven to nine-year-olds—is analytically concerned with one of the many difficult aspects of being human and young: here, the search for one's self. Priscilla and Katherine (named Puss and Cat as babies by their three-year-old brother Tom) are identical twins; they look, think and react identically too. All this makes an amusing game—until they are nine; then they feel an increasing need to be thought of as individuals. But all their attempts to achieve such a difference fail; each, for instance, buys the same birthday present for Mum. At last, in the summer, on the Norfolk coast, they arrive to go on separate

not that one complains about that—yet the book is good enough to make one want still more. In any event the merits of Geraldine Symons ought to be much more widely recognized.

The Workhouse Child has affinities with earlier prototypes—its villainy for instance—yet the touch is too light to be Victorian. Though Joan G. Robinson in *Charley* divides the blame carefully for Charley's flight, her very concern to do so makes her book seem in some respects more old-fashioned. More workhouses as well as runaways in this, Lizzie Scroton traipses between workhouses and run away finally to spend a week on the road alone and it is her story that half a century later inspires Charley, temporarily parentless and convinced by an unfortunate accident that no one wants her, to try to live on the country too.

The perception here is again excellent—both in the initial portrait of the child at odds with everyone and in the subsequent process by which her early enjoyment of outdoor housekeeping is shown turned to discomfort and disenchantment. There is effective, imaginative use of sometimes unpleasant detail to point her misery, as when, after stealing in desperation a bottle of milk, she runs back to her by now creepy-seeming hideout:

She sank down, whimpering, and opened the only thing she had brought back with her—the bottle of milk. The contents were solid and dark yellow and evil-smelling. The milk was not only sour but had gone bad. It seemed like the last straw.

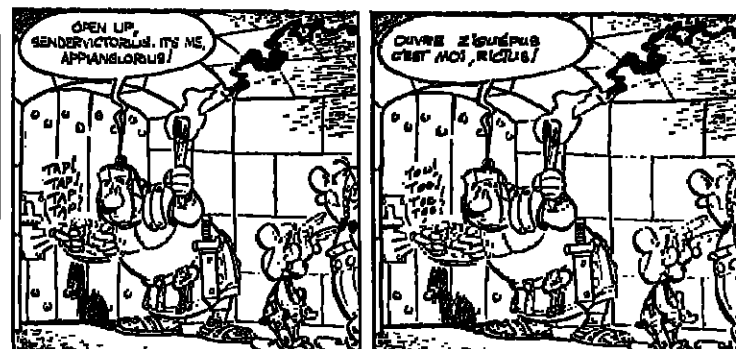
There are also some delectably funny incidents, in particular Charley's visit to the Sunday school, clad in mouthily sandals, a crumpled almost ankle-length silk dress, and a variety of garlands made from wild flowers that she thinks, mistakenly, decorative.

Unfortunately, good as it is, the book is marred by the overtone of its moral attitudes. Yes, Aunt Emma does mishandle Charley, but then she has no experience in looking after little girls, nor was she ever treated like one herself; and yes, Charley is peculiarly individual and difficult, which may endear her to the reader but is less likely to endear her to such a guardian. It is also marred by a recurrent sickness. The people who rescue Charley are just too good to be true. As for the "april-mid" fawn in the fantasy with which Charley comforts herself, it reminds one, regrettably, less of Debussy than of Baby Cham.

JILL PATON WALSH: *Fireweed*, Macmillan. 18s. (333.10618.0) GERALDINE SYMONS: *The Workhouse Child*, illustrated by Alex Pendle. Macmillan. 21s. (333.03479.1) JOAN G. ROBINSON: *Charley*, illustrated by Prudence Seward. Collins. 16s.



Ici Asterix



What about the English versions?

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'Clearly in very capable hands.' *The Times Literary Supplement*

'Ma foi cela passe fort bien.' Professor Robert Escarpit in *Le Monde*

'Excellent.' Douglas Johnson in *New Society*

'A tour de force.' *Journal of the Anglo-French Society*

In this way Asterix can be brought to those who do not read French, and also to those that do, for the two versions (see examples on these pages) are complementary, and are also well worth studying as an exercise in translation.

Further —

'In my experience, comic strips get read pretty thoroughly. Paradoxically, Asterix will make its impact — I don't see how it can fail. Whether it acts as a tonic or release from fear of oppression depends on the age and temperament of the reader.' Margery Fisher in *Growing Point*



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Nearly Neptune

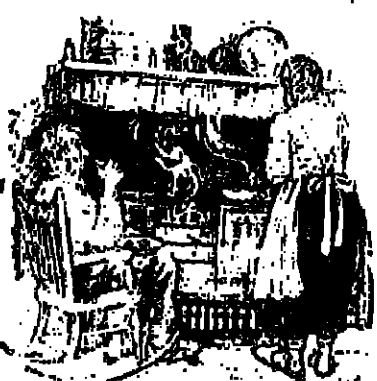
by Hugh Walters

The latest science fiction adventure by the author of *Space Ship to Saturn*, *Alien to Mercury*, *Blast Off at Woomera*, *Moon Base One* etc. 18p.

Flight Underground

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Alexander and his friends are shut up in the nightmare world of the underground tunnels near the railway station—with an enemy. 16p.



Mrs. Pinny and the Sudden Snow

by Helen Morgan

When snow fell in April, the village of Cobble Green was thrown into confusion and little Mrs Pinny the washerwoman was taken for a runaway. Illustrated by Shirley Hughes. 14p.

Faber & Faber 24 Russell Square London WC1

Puss and Cat

by Catherine Storr

In rescuing their injured brother from danger, a pair of identical twins come to appreciate the unusual relationship of twins to each other. Illustrated by Carolyn Dham. 16p.



The House that Grew

by L. M. Boston

The twins found a tiny house and, as they watched, a halfbird went in at the door. Next day the house had grown twice as big and there was a bee in possession. Illustrated by Caroline Henning. 16p.

The Voyage of Mael Duin

by Ellis Dillon

Ellis Dillon has retold this Irish legend of a young man who set out to avenge his murdered father. It is illustrated by Alan Howard with pictures on every page, half of them in colour. 18p.

Goodnight, Veronica

Written and Illustrated by Denise and Alain Trez

Veronica's adventures in a topsy-turvy world where fish swim through the air and pet animals grow smaller and smaller. "A joyous bit of wild fantasy." *Junior Bookshelf*. 18p.

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by Anthony Farrar-Hockley

Brigadier Farrar-Hockley gives a concise and authoritative account of the campaign in the Near East. Illustrated with 10 photographs and 9 maps. In the series, *Men and Events*. 16p.

Improving Your Pony

by Janet Holyoake

"Should prove invaluable to families embarking on the adventure of keeping a pony of their own. It describes the training throughout a whole year of the pony, a pony made difficult by previous misbehaviour, and while never minimizing the problems, shows how each can be overcome." *Barbara Sheppard-Smith The Times*. Fully illustrated. 36p.

Some recent titles now available in Faber paper covered editions:

THE RIVER AT GREEN KNOWE

by L. M. Boston 6p.

NURSERY TALES

by Diana Ross 5p.

THE STORY OF PAINTING

by Agnes Allen 15p.

PHILOPHE FARMER: *Charlotte Sometimes*. Illustrated by Chris Connor. Chatto and Windus. 18s. (701). 0301.9.

She was Charlotte sometimes, because the day after she'd arrived at her new boarding school, she woke up in the same bed and in the same room. At the opening of a new autumn term, too, but nearly fifty years before the date on which she'd gone to sleep the night before. She woke up not as herself, Charlotte Mary Makepeace to conscious or unconscious, pun? but as Clare Mary Moby, a girl who, in 1918, had attended the same school, with the added complication of a younger sister Emily sharing the dormitory, instead of being safely out of the picture at home, as Charlotte's real sister Emma was.

"They couldn't make out why it had happened. It could have been something to do with the facts that their terms had started on the same day of the same month—September 18—or that they shared the same initials, or that they came from families of the same structure. It certainly had something to do with the old-fashioned bed in which each had started life at a new school; because as long as Clare occupied the bed in 1918 and Charlotte in the present time, they changed places on alternate days; but when, on one of Charlotte's days of going back, she and Emily were moved out of the school to stay with the Chisel Browns with whom they were to board, the changeover stopped, leaving Clare trapped in the bed, hungry days of the end of the First World War.

On one level this book could be read as a rather unusual story of mistaken identity, and the complications it creates for a child of 13 at school. The details, the confusing differences in the landscape, the prob-

lems set by the two girls' varying abilities at different subjects, and particularly the relationships with the other pupils and the staff of the school are very well worked out and convincing. Nothing is glossed over or explained too shakily. Charlotte and Clare aren't alike in character. Clare is much the more virtuous, aren't even exactly alike to look at; as Emily says, to explain how it is that Charlotte is taken for Clare, "I just expected to see Clare and so I thought it was", and again:

"I don't suppose I ever looked at you properly. . . I knew you: her too well, at least I thought I did, perhaps that's why I never noticed you were different. This is the other, rarer, more interesting theme of the book; the problem of identity. Charlotte has even more reason than most adolescents to ask the question, Who am I really? Just after this conversation with Emily, she wonders, "Were you some particular person only because people recognized you as that?"

There's also the logical corollary—what is the difference between reality and expectation? beautifully expressed in the disillusion of the dead Chisel Brown son, who went to war full of hope and came back for his first and last leave with only the wish

that he would not die, by open cowardice. Charlotte for herself when she can't see under water, marvellously seen day.

It's a pity, after saying she is able to recommend this masterpiece: it very nearly isn't quite. Charlotte's experience, which includes the understanding of adult as well as a child's death, both of adult and child, how add up to rather less than the sum of the parts, and this is a pity because the parts are fairly good. It may be that, just too arbitrary; although end we discover what has by today's time to Clare, we sure why what happened: the experience of Charlotte's sense of inevitability which of the ingredients of a masterpiece just not there. But this is that this book isn't worth a run-of-the-mill straight stories, and if for one reader quite come off, it is still a fine example of a medium.



From *Charlotte Sometimes*

of personality . . .

JOHN ROWE TOWNSEND: *The Intruder*. Illustrated by Graham Humphreys. Oxford University Press. 18s. (19). 271304.31.

"I'm a businessman," says the shabby, sinister stranger who alleges he is old Ernest Skirlston's nephew and wants to "develop" the remote and neglected Skirlston Quay as a thriving modern resort. Arnold Halthwaite, steady and unintelligent, but quiet and vulnerable, has always called Ernest "Dad" and lived with him in Cottonree House—but really, he does not know his own identity. It's the stranger's plan to oust him, even murder him, taking over the large cottage as a private hotel. Arnold, shocked and indignant at first, gradually and sadly loses hope of beating the trickster. Old Ernest falls into a pathetic and suspicious physical decline under the man's influence. Attempts by an ingenious younger, middle-class boy called Peter, to establish the stranger's identity, lead only to a desolate attic in Mr. Townsend's Clumbe's Yard. All seems lost when a chance intervention by Skirlston leads to the stranger's development plans sets off a train of events which allows Arnold to lead the man to his death on the engulfed Skirlston sands.

To say that Mr. John Rowe Townsend's absorbing and intelligent novel follows a formula would be at the same time true and unjust. The above pattern is not, after all, unfamiliar: evil stranger entering the life of a quietly happy young person, other youngsters and some eccentric, amiable adults endeavouring to frustrate his designs, a suspenseful ending in which the quiet boy proves himself, the villain is killed and the situation is saved for decency and common sense. But the treatment in *The Intruder* is so consistently original and sensitive, so skilfully the obvious avoided and the authentic observed in the telling, that the tale emerges as something thoroughly convincing, moving—and up to date in the questions it poses. If the stranger himself is a melodramatic figure (one good eye, one bad), if the ending is achieved with a *déjà vu* machine, if there is a note of what has become almost a requisite daring in books for young adolescents (Arnold's illegitimacy, the stranger's blonde), these weaknesses are not disabling. They are, indeed, more than compensated for by Mr. Townsend's immense resourcefulness with his setting, his thorough and com-

passionate understanding of the relationship between his young people of elders, and a quality of insight, moral seriousness which pulls him away from simple, towards truthfulness. It is to regard his progress as a tug-of-war between the conventional and the serious. There are still some efforts from the former in *The Intruder*, but the latter seems steadily winning out.

of good and evil

MADEIRA L'ENGLA: *The Young Unicorns*. Gollancz. 21s. (575.00281.6).

A cathedral in New York; a laboratory where a micro-ray is being perfected, by quiet Dr. Austin, for medical purposes (dangerous, though, in the wrong hands); a disused underground station where strange rites are held; a sinister junk shop with a wishing-lamp; a happy family home, in the heart of the city, where grace is not only said but sung—such new and old, dark and light scenes are deliberately crossed and juxtaposed throughout this extraordinary book. Its cast, with the three Austin children at the centre, follows the same design: it includes a gifted schoolgirl Emily, blinded by that same laser ray when she disturbed an unknown intruder, a boy, Dave, ex-rebels for Emily, tutor-fashion, every day after school, a Dean, a visiting Canon (called in as a kind of spiritual detective), a mysteriously absent Bishop—and a gang of "hoods" known as the Bats, and terrifyingly directed by some untraced adult power.

"Over and over again as I walk the streets [says the Dean], I get the warning. The Bats are preparing for something; the city's in danger. And indeed, among the scientists,

scholars and churchmen, even, who are the agents of evil? Who are the counter-weights in the Canon's words: When evil declares itself in its form, it declares itself as an agent of light. . . . We underestimate the darkness if we assume that any of the created order, even the Apollonian itself, is safely sealed from. We totally miss the point of the resolved and complete work in *Wrinkle in Time*, the book by the author is so far known here too, was about the battle of good and evil, in a world of modern and ancient forces, and it had unforgettable passages of magic and witchery; but it was weaknesses too, not the least of something over-local and over-mental in the politics of the *The Young Unicorns* (where, of the prevailing strangeness, of the seeming supernatural left without a rational explanation is a good deal more subtle in its complexities. And even those readers who contrive to bypass thought and the allegory, can be impressed by the sheer dramatic, thrills of the triumph of the possible, the probable, one might think, is logically credible and intuitively ad-



Fiction

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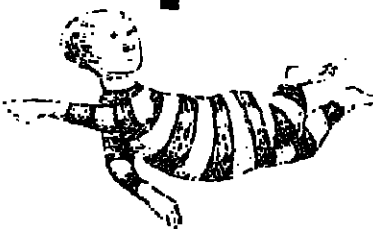
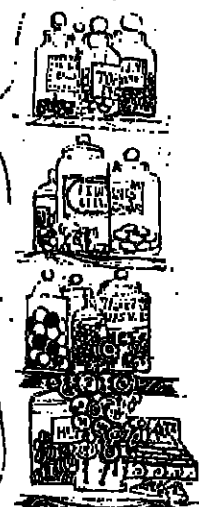
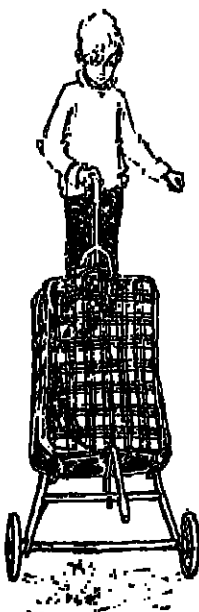
Muriel Spark

The Very Fine Clock

Illustrated by Edward Gorey

This beguiling tale of a clock that serves its master well has just the faintest vibration of its author's mordant wit, which echoes in the comical and slightly mysterious drawings of Edward Gorey.

Macmillan



Quality brantubs

Any dictionary which set out to give an account of the emotive rather than the rational meanings of words would be bound to pay some attention to the word "annual". It has annual did you get for Christmas? In this matter, can 1989 be much different from 1929, when the present reviewer would widely have pressed, and had pressed upon him, just such a question? A thrilling word, "annual". Specifically, it might have meant the *Playboy Annual*, or *Tiger Tim's*, or perhaps the *Holiday Annual*, which was a mid-winter celebration of the existence of Harry Wharton & Co. In general, it meant a fat gathering of bits and pieces, stories, puzzles, quizzes—curiously exciting for its brantub quality, and because an annual was such a useable book—a tough, malleable book. You could paint and crayon in it, join the dots together to form pictures, and your love for it was never so great as when its binding burst and it became a hap hazard bundle of thick leaves. I got two annuals! Lend 'em to you if you lend me yours?

It is a phenomenon of recent years that several editors from what one must, in wretched shorthand, call the world of quality books have sought to enter this Yuletide market—to slip into the brantub heaps in the bookshops their own better-written, better-illustrated versions of the annual. It is perhaps a little less easy to do this than it was to introduce the wooden horse into Troy. The right, superior mixture of the essential jolly tawdriness of appearance—difficult to get that right! And what about a title? It must be as obvious as a gobstopper, as sweet and tempting.

No one has been more cunning about this than Ann Thwaite, whose second annual for the under-tens, *Allsorts 2*, has now appeared. *Allsorts* is a good title, and there is a lot about eating within its pages. Mrs. Thwaite has this motto hanging above her desk. The price may be a dissembler, merely in relation to the average price of its rivals. The paper is properly thick. The traditional trivia have their place: the picture that contains 19 mistakes; a quiz (a sort of comprehension test on the contents of the annual itself); instructions for making mother a birthday cake, and so on.

It is the literary content, together with the quality of illustration, that distinguishes *Allsorts* from its slapdash and sometimes barely literate competitors. There are 15 poems by 10 poets, who include Anthony Thwaite, Gavin Ewart, Sieve Smith, Vernon Scannell and George MacBeth. Mr. Thwaite's "No Knees and No Nose" is one of the best things in the book: an enchanting piece of verbal nonsense. Interestingly, straight stories and straight articles predominate. In the prose, over fantasy—a reversal of the proportions in the normal annual for under-tens. Edwin Brock writes about being a policeman ("It was this feeling of being invisible which was so hard to accept"); Sieve Smith about having always lived in Palmers Green ("Everybody smiles and is friendly, but it is a sweet distant smile on our

faces that we have"). Zullikan (whose writes about the sounds of cricket—born in a town in Pakistan which made cricket balls, he knew the game by the sounds it made ("Pluck! Pluck! Pluck! And Crack!")) long before he knew it was a game at all. The fantasy, such as there is, tends to be gothic: Alastair Elliot, for example, turns an old story upside down and writes about a father who runs away to sea.

Intelligent, amusing, lively, pleasantly written, most of it—and the quality of the illustrations is guaranteed by the names of Margery Gill, Glenys Ambrus, Raymond Briggs, David McKee and David Gentleman, among others. Here is an annual in the old, faintly and agreeably disreputable sense, yet thoroughly reputable to boot. The paradox ought to carry it into many a Trojan nursery—as well, of course, as into nurseries that simply know a good miscellany when they see it.

Nurseries, for example, that would welcome Barbara Willard's charming collection which she calls (another admirable title) *Hullabaloo*. A hullabaloo, she explains in her introduction, is an uproar, a matter sometimes of "plain noise, like football or the swimming pool", but perhaps most truly described as a fuss and a pother. The immemorial hullabaloo between adults, (especially parents) and children is what she is most concerned with; and the chronological arrangement of her chosen extracts is designed to show how the causes of this sort of pother have altered with the years.

"Be thankful for NOW", she advises her readers: who will see the point of the injunction when they read that children could be imprisoned, in 1351, for "taking off the hoods of people" in "any place of the Palace of Westminster, during the

New and trad

TRADITIONAL annuals in their modern dress do not perhaps need notice in these pages; they are mainly bought by children, who do not trouble to read book reviews; they know what they like, and grab it if they get the chance. However, three newish annuals published by the B.B.C. are so nicely produced they may safely be recommended by godparents. *Hector's House Annual* offers entertaining stories about the absurd dog, cat and frog first seen in a television series. The stories are not by the original authors, but by Frank Moore, with bright, effective pictures by David McKee. There are puzzles, (things to make, and captions to fill in), *The Herbs Annual* has witty pictures by Esor (based on Ivor Wood's puppets), crowswords, riddle-me-rees, games, and several good stories by Michael Bond. These two are for the four to eights. The sixth *Blue Peter Annual*, for the six to twelves, recreates some of the best things from the programme, and includes some good new things.

On the same wave-length, Paul

Hamlyn has produced four *Tinker and Tinker* stories, by E. Scarry. Tinker and Tinker are about a brown rabbit and a very clever mechanic, and "a big strong potamus". Their combination are conveyed through them to carry them successfully through their dizzying procession of the most at home when told by a madman, and out of place, really, (ton safari), and in the *Wild* (the printed page, where they can be as still and faded as pinned their horses to trail the badlanders, and their hideout.") Good value for portable and exportable than random, and the chief pleasure of the books reviewed here is that of viewing human habitats and human predicaments with refreshingly foreign eyes.

The strangest and most haunting viewpoint is offered by Roland Robinson's beautifully illustrated collection of *Aboriginal Myths and Legends*, coming from a world of rainforests, and water-holes, and spears and firesticks, in which man is a lonely inhabitant of a land full of animals and spirits. Some such Stone Age culture lies far in the past of every more developed society; perhaps these tales have such a magical appeal because the Aboriginal lives in the Dreamtime "of us all. Certainly their impact owes much to a telling as pungently local as salt on the tongue. This book offers much to adults as to children; of any age, would not like to see the tale of Old Nagacook's campfire being across the night?

Also from the antiques, and also the result of years of devoted collection, are Inez Hames's *Folk Tales of the South Pacific*, and Mr. Hames's *The Remarkable Rat*, for the comparison, for his language lacks the poetic force of Mr. Hames's. The tales are redeemed never by the delightful sense of humour which runs through them, and the charm of the richer and lovelier that they portray.

To anyone who thinks of African tales as primitive, the contrast between the Aboriginal and West African tales would be instructive. The crafty trickster is Anansi the Spider from Ghana (*The Pineapple Child*) or Ijapa the Tortoise from Nigeria, the stories are about men in society, about the greedy and the proud, and the downfalls that await them. Often they conclude with a splendidly memorable proverb—

It is hard to imagine quite how Peter Spicer could still improve upon some of his past productions for "The Mother Goose Library", but his latest book, *And So the Garden Grows*, is certainly the most colourful so far. In it, two Willard tends to slip into the timeless journey through some of the garden's ancient gardens and towns, drawn on location by Mr Spicer and accompanied by a nursery rhyme in a garden or flower theme, and here is a short explanatory note at the end of the book, identifying some of the most famous places. As children pore over the extraordinary photographs of these gardens, as they surely already have half a foot in this magical land, so brilliantly has it been brought to life in these pages. *A Rocket in my Pocket* presents a very different picture: a collection of

tough, gritty rhythmic chants and nonsense rhymes drawn from the oral tradition of American youngsters by an un-solemn anthropologist, Carl Wilbers, and engagingly illustrated in the same cheerful spirit by Susan Suba. As an enterprise this is no where near the scholarly standards set by Iona and Peter Opie in *The Lore and Language of Schoolchildren*, but as an entertainment *A Rocket in my Pocket* is very good value indeed, and should never have had to wait over twenty years before appearing in this country. As it is, many of the rhymes will be well known to children over here—and to the adults who may occasionally be on the wrong end of some of them. As with the Opie's book, however, the cruder and more insulting rhymes, particularly those relating to ethnic origin, have been tactfully omitted. There is plenty left, however, to wake up memories and set new limits to awful juvenile

From *A Rocket in my Pocket*

Borrowed grandmothers

THE folk tale is the most utilitarian of genres; the dream of fulfillment of impossible wishes, the brown rabbit and a very clever mechanic, and "a big strong potamus". Their combination are conveyed through them to carry them successfully through their dizzying procession of the most at home when told by a madman, and out of place, really, (ton safari), and in the *Wild* (the printed page, where they can be as still and faded as pinned their horses to trail the badlanders, and their hideout.") Good value for portable and exportable than random, and the chief pleasure of the books reviewed here is that of viewing human habitats and human predicaments with refreshingly foreign eyes.

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Nearest home is a selection of *Old European Fairy Tales* by Irma Kaplan. Europe, too, can offer remote and romantic places—this selection includes a tale from Lapland and one from Transylvania among its offerings. Unfortunately the pleasure of seeing with foreign eyes is not to be had here: the local flavour of the tales has been submerged in a uniformly chatty telling.

Finally, for the very young, six titles by Mollie Clark, enticingly illustrated in different hands, vigorously told in language simple enough for the greenest novice reader to manage for himself, and in a style that will give no pain to parents who find themselves reading them aloud over and over again.

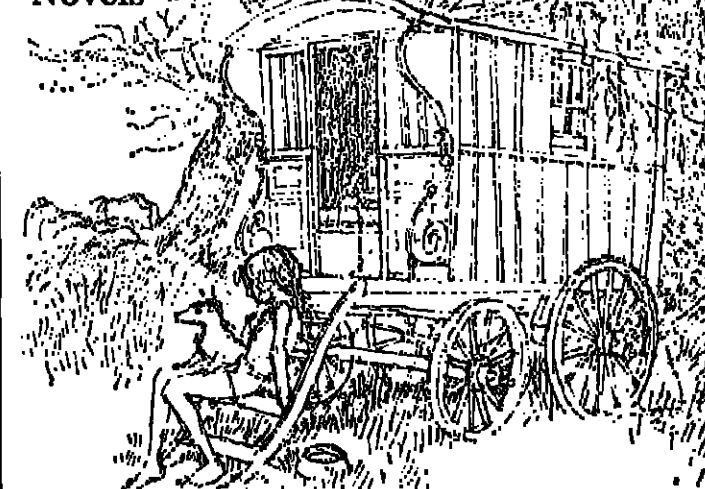
IRMA KAPLAN: *Old European Fairy Tales*. F. Muller, 25s. (584.62385.2).
MOLLIE CLARK: *The Remarkable Rat* (246.63972.5); *Silly Simon* (246.63973.3); *Monotaro* (246.63974.1); *Little Luller Line Tree* (246.63975.X); *Rabbit and Fox* (246.63976.B); *The Three Feathers* (246.63977.6).
First Folk Tales Books 1-6: Rupert Hart-Davis, 8s. each.

ROLAND ROBINSON (Compiler): *Aboriginal Myths and Legends: Age old Stories of the Australian Tribes*. Paul Hamlyn, 17s. 6d. (600.100.09X).
INEZ HAMES: *Folk Tales of the South Pacific*. University of London Press, 8s. (340.09451.6).
HAROLD COURLANDER and EZEKIEL A. ESCHUGHAYI: *Ijapa the Tortoise and other Nigerian Tales*. Bodley Head, 18s. (370.01205.4).
PEGGY APPIAH: *The Pineapple Child and other Tales from Ashanti*. André Deutsch, 22s. (233.93873.4).
ARTHUR BOWIE CHRISMAN: *Shen of the Sea: Chinese Stories for Children*. Illustrated by Else Hasselris. Hamish Hamilton, 21s. (341.01764.5).
IRMA KAPLAN: *Old European Fairy Tales*. F. Muller, 25s. (584.62385.2).
MOLLIE CLARK: *The Remarkable Rat* (246.63972.5); *Silly Simon* (246.63973.3); *Monotaro* (246.63974.1); *Little Luller Line Tree* (246.63975.X); *Rabbit and Fox* (246.63976.B); *The Three Feathers* (246.63977.6).
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Children's Books

Novels



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British consultant: Margaret Meek, Lecturer in Education, University of London

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The hilarious letters sent on the Twelve Days of Christmas in response to the increasingly unmanageable number of gifts. Illustrated 10s 6d

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How Edward trained for and entered the Zambolia River marathon, and overcame the tricks of wily Sebastian to gain eventual victory. Illustrated by Richard Sawers 18s

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Illustrated by Gyo Fujikawa
A handsome new Mother Goose which will be treasured by children. Gyo Fujikawa's drawings sparkle through the pages—delighting young and old alike. 21s

The Story of BRITAIN

R J UNSTEAD
Illustrated by Victor Ambrus

The story of the British people brilliantly captured in words and pictures for children of ten and over. 16 colour plates, over 200 drawings.

42s.

ADAM & CHARLES BLACK

Good reading

EDWARD BLIGHEN (Editor): *Miscellany Six*. Illustrated. Oxford University Press. 30s. (19.271301.9)

Another joy of anthologies is their untidiness. Few of us are horn tidy, though most of us have tidiness thrust upon us, and a big, fat bumper annual is a way of indulging the love of muddle without its threatening to spill over into ordinary domestic life. It gives the joys of the junk shop and the button drawer without the responsibility of putting back what has been pulled out.

If there is a fault to find with Edward Blighen's latest *Miscellany*, it is that it is not untidy enough. Too many cherries, and too little fruit

salad so that the result, in all senses, is a little thin. The individual standard is high, probably a great deal higher than in most books of the kind, but the general impression is slight and it is hard to escape an overall feeling of condescension. The layout, too, is rather depressingly hygienic and the illustrations, however excellent in themselves, are not sufficiently varied in feeling. Splendidly exempt from this criticism are Betty Middleton-Sandford's drawings and colour photographs illustrating her "Arctic Journey".

On the whole, in this miscellany it is the non-fiction which comes off best. Brian Vesey-Fitzgerald on hedgehogs, Anne Ashberry on miniature gardens and Anthony Pearson

on fishing have both impact, stimulus and information. The stories, on the other hand, are fine tales of Anancy, the spider man and his epic fight with the ghost wraiths, tend to be little flat. But then, one can feel, most of this nightmarish fiction would disappear if only there were more of everything. Shillings is a good price, certainly, but the book is admirably well put together, and should that, in a comparison of this kind, be the prime consideration? For some people's little less good taste and a little more good would have made more excellent.

1989 10.13.89

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A drug on the market? Some stimulants among the bromides

It is ten or fifteen years since those disenchanted young people, the hippies, the Hell's Angels, the skinheads, were looking at their first picture-books, constructing their first models, exploring all the visual and tactile delights freely offered to every child who goes to school? Perhaps, we promise too much. That old Jesuit boast "Give us a child up to the age of seven, and he's ours for life" sounds strangely today. The under-ten are as carefully tended in our Primary Schools as are young plants in a nursery garden; it is when they are lifted, and left to put down their roots again as best they may in some less fertile patch of soil that troubles start.

What have picture books got to do with it? They are such an obvious example of the glut of goodies heaped upon the very young. Can one have too much of a good thing? Books are like sweets or indeed any other nourishment: each person can take only so much, however delicious, without suffering a natural revulsion. Imagine some child of the past, suddenly let into (say) the Children's Book Centre. Ruskin, perhaps, who passed his earliest days either playing with wooden bricks or "contentedly in tracing the squares and comparing the colours of my carpet; examining the knots in the wood of the floor, or counting the bricks in the opposite houses". With all his love of beauty, one can yet imagine him turning away from that temple of seduction in case it dissipated his imagination. Even Walter de la Mare, champion of children's pleasures, warned that reading "which may be one of life's inextinguishable pleasures and blessings... may also become a mere habit, an escape from thinking, or a drug".

Too many of the books noticed below seem to be "escape from thinking" books. They are beautifully printed and presented, and will certainly keep a child quiet for 10 minutes; singly, they may be studied again with profit and enjoyment, but it is as hard to recommend one above another as it is to pinpoint one that falls below the rest. Half-a-dozen do seem to have more to offer to the thinking child, and our first choice might even be submitted to a young Ruskin. Brian Wildsmith's work has always been lavishly praised: won-

derful colours flow through the pages of his books in great streams, yet he never leaves out those tiny details - the markings on a bird's wing, the suborn gleam in a donkey's eye that children love to see. The Fables of La Fontaine are not naturally a child's favourite reading, and some children will never have a book for its pictures alone, but *The Miller, the Boy and the Donkey* (the fifth in the series) is a good one to try as it can be read to be a proper story, with real people. Wildsmith sets it in Renaissance Italy, with towers and cupolas and mosaic fountains of dazzling beauty, and with the people dressed in rich, shining silks and satins; a virtuoso performance, turning a time-worn comedy into grand opera.

To turn from this to the country dancing of William Stobbs needs the blink of an eye, but Mr. Stobbs is unrivalled in his presentation of English folk tales, and it is pointless to compare two such different artists. Time and again his pictures bring the old stories up to such a pitch of excitement you think the characters will bounce off the page. *A Frog he Would a-Wooing Go* is as good as Mr. Stobbs can make it, opera hat, plum tail coat, embroidered waistcoat, and when the cat and her kittens come tumbling in you can feel poor Mistress Mouse squeak.

Raymond Briggs is another illustrator with a style all his own. In *The Elephant and the Bad Baby* (text by Elfrida Vipont), an enormous elephant in a real elephant, with huge feet and tiny eyes and no clothes, one takes a baby for a walk. The elephant steals ice cream, sweets, pies and buns for himself and the baby, and on each thieving spree the shopkeepers' wares are shown as large and clear as in a Stanley Spencer painting. The text is as good as the pictures, with a satisfying rumpety, rumpety, rumpety refrain and a happy bedtime ending.

Dentice and Alain Tiez have produced a dozen clever picture books; two or three have surreal touches, but they have never before attempted anything quite like *Good Night, Veronica*. As usual, their wit and inventiveness are outstanding, and, like *Alice in Wonderland*, their story is likely to give intense pleasure to any

child bright enough to see the jokes. As the jokes are visual they are easy to see, but they defy written explanation. Essential reading for Jonathan Miller, and strongly recommended to everyone else.

Ronald and the Wizard Calico is an updated version of a medieval puppet show, and great fun too. Bayeux tapestry knights in clanking armour guard the lovely Rosalie; wicked green knights steal her away; Sultan Suhlmann desires her for his bride. It all somehow looks as if it ought to be on television: thrilling, action-packed pictures some way beneath Uccello and Gerald Rose, hacked up by some of the most shameless doggerel ever to swagger into print.

The dandies called to Ronald's knights And asked them round for tea, So all the army marched away And left poor Rosalie.

The youngest children always like a farm story. *The Little Wooden Farmer* was written by Alice Dalgluish in 1930 and has proved a perennial favourite in the United States; it is now reissued with charming new pictures by Anita Lobel, showing how the farmer and his wife, with help from the captain of a passing boat, fill their little farm with animals. The farmer and his wife are meant to be toys, so Anita Lobel might just as well have made them wooden looking, but three-year-olds won't complain.

BRIAN WILDSMITH: *The Miller, the Boy and the Donkey*, Oxford University Press, 18s. (19.2796.20).

WILLIAM STOBBS: *A Frog he Would a-Wooing Go*, Bodley Head, 16s. (170.01508.8).

ELFRIDA VIPONT and RAYMOND BRIGGS: *The Elephant and the Bad Baby*, Hamish Hamilton, 21s. (241.01639.8).

DENTICE and ALAIN TIEZ: *Good Night, Veronica*, Faber and Faber, 18s. (571.08934.8).

EMANUELE LUZZATI: *Ronald and the Wizard Calico*, Hutchinson Junior Books, 16s. (09.097490.5).

ALICE DALGLISH: *The Little Wooden Farmer*, Pictures by Anita Lobel, Hamish Hamilton, 13s. 6d. (241.01676.2).

First books, for the under fives, must be about simple, familiar things. By the time they are six or seven children are ready to look beyond their own environment to other lands and alien ways. The books noticed below are all concerned with far-off things in place, in time, in atmosphere.

Pearl Binder's drawings reap the harvest of many years spent in the Far East: in Josephine Marquand she has found a writer who shares her affection for Chinese children, and together they have created a real hero in Chi Ming, son of one of the poorest families in Ladder Street, Hong-kong. *Chi Ming and the Tiger Kitten*, their first book, instantly caught the attention: in spite of the complexities of its plot it was simply written, and there, wriggling and squirming on every page like so many tropical fish in a tank, were the

Chinese working, whether they made this book. The only enduring, honourable, chosen feature of it is the meaning of its title: it should have been called *and the Lion Dance*. Nuka and Naja in the Land of spinning the story. Here are most touching, efforts to earn enough to send their children to school. He sells his children at home in melon to the water, their tiny, rabbit-warren winter quarters, sleeping, eating, playing. When summer comes Nuka and Naja, young explorers, sail church. At last, he is on the breaking ice, and get lost. examination, and is they are gazed at by seals, harassed can go to school from birds, and alarmed by walruses, evening until he is they live on raw eggs, until they are copied by a wise mother seal, who rings them fish. At last they are you!

From Hongkong, and return home. Franz Ingrid Vang Nyman's story fits the pictures so Danish, but did most of it is hard to believe it was written Sweden. When she died the artist's death; beautifully her unpublished drawings and printed, drawings and children to Franz Benet delight the eye. Birdlovers will for five years in the appreciate the tiny sketches of guil-

lots, sea-mews, augs, puffins, cormorants, eiderduck and so on.

Ash Tuesday comes from Australia, and tells the real-life story of a terrible fire that devastated much of Tasmania in 1967. The day of the fire is seen through the eyes of a boy, whose sixth birthday it is. Simon rides alone to the little village school, and it is there that he and the other children are trapped when the fire comes. Only the resourcefulness and courage of their young teacher save the children being burned to death. An impressive story, with effective illustrations in smoky browns and reds.

A resistance leader is an excellent introduction to history for small boys, especially if his stand against tyranny involves him in shooting an apple off his son's head. Paul Nussbaum's handsome pictures for *William Tell and his Son* give just

the needed fillip to Bettina Hürlimann's soberly told tale, excellently translated here by Barbara Leone Picard. The story is meaty enough for ten-year-olds, and sufficiently vivid to hold the interest of freedom fighters of six.

So much for facts. Little girls too young to tackle collected fairy tales much enjoy reading them singly, battered along with pictures. Richard Sadler's version of "Mother Holle", with Regine Grube-Heinecke's, twice but colourful pictures, just fits the bill. It is interesting to compare Richard Sadler's translation with the one in Andrew Lang's *Red Fairy Book*: Which sounds more up-to-date?

"Cock-a-doodle-do! Our golden girl is back anew!"

Click, click, click, Our golden maid's come back

"Cock-a-doodle-do! Our golden girl is here anew!"

Click, click, click, Our golden girl's come back.

Mr. Sadler's are the first versions.

It is quite a good idea to change the title to *Mother Carey*, a name better known in England, but it was not her elderdown that the sisters had to shake till the feathers flew: it was her mattress.

The legend of the willow pattern plate has also been better told before, but Joseph Low's pictures (no need for the extra touches of rouge and green shadow) are decorative and beguiling. "Long, long ago" may not be a very original opening, but it serves better as a time piece than "during the reign of the emperors". Dr. Seuss is not one for high-

falutin' language: high-spirited, high explosive, hilarious, but never high-flown. *If I Ran the Circus* was first published in the United States in 1956, but has been kept from us till now. The Circus McGurkus! The cream of the cream!

The Circus McGurkus! The Circus McGurkus! Colossal!

The Circus McGurkus! Colossal! Astonishing! Fantastic! Terrific! Tremendous!

What would the Brothers Grimm or Andrew Lang have made of Dr. Seuss?

JOSEPH LOW: *Mother Carey and the Lion Dance*, Dennis Dobson, 18s. (234.77992.6).

FRANZ BILMIR: *Summer-time*, Pictures by Ingrid Vang Nyman. Translated by Louise Orr, Collins, 18s. (333.10318.4).

JOAN WOODBURY: *Ash Tuesday*, Illustrations by Max Angus, Macmillan, 18s. (333.10318.4).

BARBARA LEONE PICARD: *William Tell and his Son*, Based upon the Swiss version by Bettina Hürlimann, illus-

trations by Paul Nussbaum, Richard Sadler, 24s. (185410305.9).

HOWARD SADLER (Translator): *Mother Carey, A Fairy Tale by the Brothers Grimm*, Illustrated by Regine Grube-Heinecke, Richard Sadler, 18s. (185410.000.8).

ALVIN THRELL and NANCY CLAUER: *The Legend of the Willow Plate*, Pictures by Joseph Low, Hamish Hamilton, 18s. (241.02749.1).

DR. SEUSS: *If I Ran the Circus*, Colours, 10s.

Stories that count

ISOMETRICS count sheep, optimists count chickens, angels count their blessings, realists count their spoms. Most of us like to count something or other, little children grieve for the Pobble, who had no toes to count. Counting books give hours of pleasure, and recent publications offer a fine choice: the first three noticed below are all impeccably produced, ingeniously contrived, and blazing with vitality.

First, Rodney Peppé's *Circus Numbers*, which joyfully displays circus performers, four jugglers, five strongmen, six tigers up to ten, and then skips to twenty doves and, finally, one hundred elephants. A special prize for ingenuity ought to be given to Mr. Peppé for his brilliant (thumbprint) elephants.

Eric Carle's *1, 2, 3 to the Zoo* is good, too. Here, the large double-page pictures leave space at the

bottom for a train, whose open trucks gradually fill up with the animals that have been counted already. At the end, a triple-page spread opens out to reveal all the animals in their proper places at the zoo.

These two are, of course, for babies. More ambitious, and remarkably successful, Horst Lenke's *One Times One* also takes us through the early stages, but proceeds to quite complicated sums of addition, subtraction and multiplication. The pictures, numbers and symbols are amusing, ingenious, and always clear: most admirable.

Two smaller books deserve mention. *James and Lucy* prints a handwritten letter to a child which includes masses of small sketches of James and Lucy playing, and cunningly interpolates easy exercises in number. One feels this was written by a real mother for a real child.

One, Two, Three for Fun fits

counting games into the framework of a simple story in much the same way: unpretentious, and popular. *teddycars 1 to 10* is glossy, bright, and ingenious, showing the travails of toy teddies at the cleaners, on the clothes-line, and in other uncomfortable situations. Not unattractively, the bears look fearfully depressed: macabre.

RODNEY PEPPÉ: *Circus Numbers*, Longmans Young Books, 16s. (582.1394.5).

ERIC CARLE: *1, 2, 3 to the Zoo*, Hamish Hamilton, 18s. (241.01677.0).

HORST LENKE: *One Times One*, Dent, 15s. (460.03764.2).

KATHRYN MARSH: *James and Lucy*, Basil Blackwell, 6s. (603.11800.4).

MURIEL STANLEY: *One, Two, Three for Fun*, Illustrated by Seymour Fleischman, Chambers, 10s. 6d. (55.31239.0).

SIRHANNA GRITZ: *teddycars 1 to 10*, Ernest Benn, 15s. (510.12411.9).

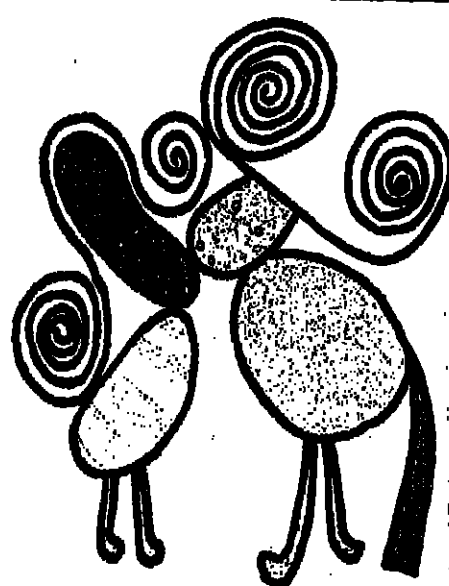
For ages 10-16
ANTONIA BARBER
The Ghosts

"As exciting as any thriller, I could not recommend this charming book too strongly."
GUARDIAN
18s

For ages 10-16
JOAN CLARKE
Foxon's Hole

An ingenious and thrilling story by the author of *The Happy Planet* about a top-secret experiment in time travel.
320 pages
27s

JONATHAN CAPE



BRIAN ANSON
Gus and Gilly
&
Gus and Gilly: The Winter Journey

These cheerful, compact little picture-books in bold bright colours introduce two new characters and an exciting new talent to the small child's library. Gus and Gilly are two fantasy creatures with curling horns who meet in a magic land in the first book, and in the second they make a journey through the snow, across a big lake and through a dark forest to a beautiful valley.
7s each

For ages 7-12
JOAN AIKEN
A Small Pinch of Weather

"Genuine, first hand fairy stories are unusual enough... it would be wrong not to acknowledge the rare real thing."
NEW STATESMAN
Illustrated
18s

For ages 8-14
POLLY REDFORD
The Christmas Bower

This enchanting story, the only known work of ornithological science fiction, is full of quips and quibbles and is delightfully illustrated by Edward Gorey.
21s

JONATHAN CAPE

IN BUGHAM
ONS

A collection of scenes in full colour by the creator of *Borka*. Each text and four large fold-in posters which can be 11" x 8", November 20, 30s

QUEBLAKE
JANCY

Quentin Blake's *Jancy* was an immediate success. "Already a family favourite, this new Statesman. The GUARDIAN thought it was a 'bold story', will be as warmly welcomed."
10 1/2" x 8 1/2", 18s

JAWS

Illustrated by Martin Gilbert. *STAIN* by Basil Collier. *by David Johnson*

Jeffries *TRY* by Greg Jeffries. *John Lloyd Jones*

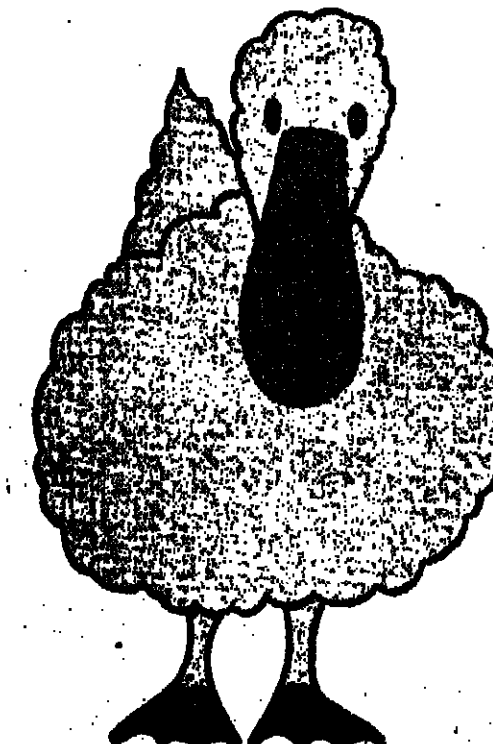
For ages 8-14
WILLARD PRICE
Gorilla Adventure

"There is an adventure on almost every page... enough excitement for any boy or girl."
TEACHERS WORLD
Illustrated
18s

For ages 8-14
JOHN HATFIELD
Quintilian and the Curious Weather Shop

A new adventure about Quintilian the china dog, the museum toys, and the curator's young son who brings them all to life.
Illustrated 18s

JONATHAN CAPE



MICHAEL SPINK
The 1 2 3 Frieze

"An asset to any plain wall" said the TLS of Michael Spink's *The ABC Frieze*, praising its "bold clear pictures and type". Now he has turned to an enchanting version, also in colour, of mathematical primaries. The first half illustrates numbers and the second half is a country scene to test the child's ability to count. Folded into a cover and can be used as a book.
18s

For all ages
J.P. MARTIN
Uncle and Claudius the Camel

The fifth in the remarkable series of fantasies featuring the benevolent millionaire elephant. "Splendid nonsense-saga." SUNDAY TIMES
Illustrated by Quentin Blake
21s

For ages 7-12
ERICH KASTNER
The Little Man & the Little Miss

The further adventures of the cheeky two-inch boy who lives in a match-box. By the author of *Emil and the Detectives*.
Illustrated
21s

JONATHAN CAPE

Doing their own thing

Magnus Macfarlane from the Outer Hebrides, Gus Oliver from the United States of America, Jonah Simpson from Jamaica, and Nicholas Wakefield with no fixed home, are all, for one reason or another, boys apart. In the case of the first three the separateness is in the mind, while in that of Nicholas it is imposed from without. All are aware of their outsiderness, but while to Gus and Nicholas it presents a problem, to Magnus it is a source of happiness. Perhaps the fact that both live in island communities, to some extent cut off from the world at large, may have something to do with this.

Magnus lives on Sula, a very small island in the north Atlantic—"Scotland to the east, America to the west", both equally remote to him. Animals are his world, and he contrives to escape as often as possible from the real world of school and a crofter's chores to observe and draw and simply be with the seals, the wild birds, the sheep and goats of the island.

Among the eldest of the fifteen children in the island's school, he has played truant so often under the mild regime of Miss Macfarlane that his reading level is still at "Henry Penny". Now, however, Miss Macfarlane has been replaced by the young Andrew Murray, trail of body after police, but strong in determination. He recognizes the genius and observation in Magnus's drawings and feels the need to develop his potentialities, which involves first taming him.

The developing relationship between Magnus and Andrew forms the fundamental theme of *Sula* and sustains the reader's interest entirely

unaided for the first half of the book. But either the author lacks the ability to sustain and work out this theme alone, or she gets panicky lest it be too adult for her readers. Whatever the reason, about half way through she decides to introduce a more conventional situation, which lowers the book to a more ordinary level. Andrew's cousin arrives to make a film on the island, his long-lost uncle is found, and an unfortunate piece of love interest unconvincingly helps to make his problems easier to solve.

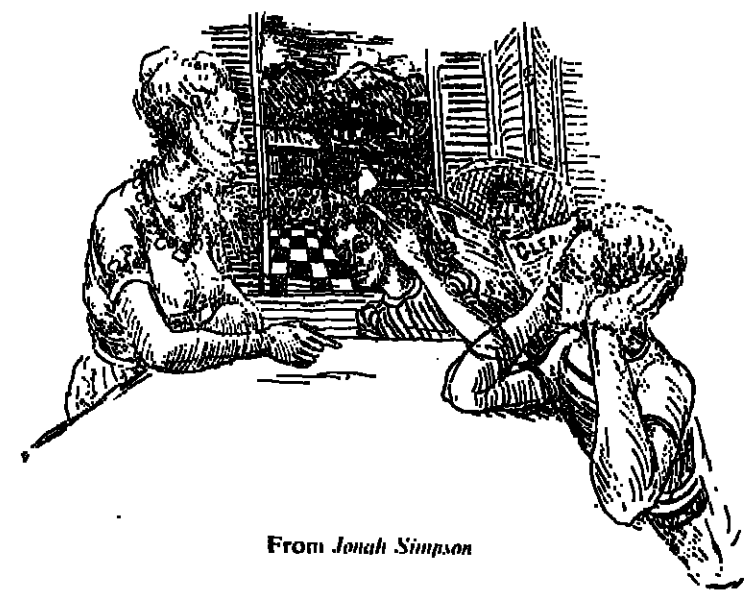
Despite this lapse, the book is well worth reading. Both Andrew and Magnus are real and complex people. Andrew has not only the unruly class to master and Magnus to come to terms with, but he has also his physical disability to overcome. Magnus has to learn that he cannot live in a world of his own for ever, but that people matter as well as animals. The characters of both teacher and pupil are enriched and developed as they come more fully to understand each other.

Like Magnus, Gus, the hero of *The Stone-Faced Boy*, is something of a lone wolf, although he is the middle child of a family of five. As a protection against the teasing of other children, he has learnt never to show his emotions. Now he finds he is unable to do so, even when he wants to, and this worries him. He develops a habit of feeling his face to see if he is smiling. "Pretty soon he would have to start carrying around signs which read: 'loneliness', 'scowling', 'puzzlement', 'curiosity', 'anger' which he would have to hold up over his head." If, however, the reader thinks this book is going to be the story of how he solves this problem, he is mistaken.

for Gus remains stone-faced to the end. Instead, by relating the incidents of one night as they appear to Gus, a keen insight is given into his real feelings. Those incidents are curious enough. First the children find a strange dog in the snow, and then arrive home to find an equally strange woman in the kitchen. She turns out to be their eccentric great aunt from Italy. Obliquely she seems

chuckle-making story, but the depths will probably be seen and appreciated only by the mature, discerning few. Donald Mackay's almost dreamlike illustrations very satisfactorily complement the story.

Another boy who lives in a world of his own is *Jonah Simpson*, a Jamaican who spends the summer holiday with an uncle in Port Royal, which appears to him a city of excitement and mystery. Gus and



From *Jonah Simpson*

to understand Gus's predicament and, perhaps symbolically, she gives him a geode, a stone seemingly as featureless as his own face, through a crack of which he can see sparkling crystals inside. Through her, indirectly, he learns how to master his young brother, the biggest thorn in his flesh, and he overcomes his irrational fear of the wolf.

This is a strange book that can be read at several levels. Superficially it is an entertaining and at times

people are shown through the lens of Jonah's supercharged imagination. That he is also gifted with second-sight adds to the feeling of unreality and remoteness with which the story is presented.

To call it a story, however, is something of a distortion, since it is not so much a connected narrative as a collection of profiles and impressions linked together through the character of Jonah. True it is not without incidents, some funny,

Another country

ALAN WILDSMITH: *Ahmed, Prince of Ashira*. Illustrated by Brian Wildsmith. Andre Deutsch, 22s, (233 96113, 51).

You will not find Shalandria in any atlas. It is a country imagined by Alan Wildsmith, and imagined in considerable detail. In it were five cities, the two Laishas in the north being cut off by mountains and desert from Tal'anda, Shenzawani (now ruined) and Ashira in the south, so that all communication between the two parts of the country is by sea. So much of the geography is unexplained, or casually glossed at, and yet one feels that the author knows so very much more about it, that Shalandria emerges as more real and three-dimensional than most imaginary countries—or indeed many real ones—appear in books. This leads one to suspect (and hope) that we have not heard the last of it, especially as Shalandria's history appears to be as fully developed in Mr. Wildsmith's mind as its geography is.

The Five Cities were originally united in harmony under a wise and beneficent dynasty of kings. Unfortunately, as dynasties do, it became weak in time, and the last king was murdered some twelve years before the book begins. Now there is division between the cities, and the country is in danger of breaking apart. El Raschid, the dictator of Ashira, is scheming to bring the other cities and the nomad desert tribes together under his tyranny. But rumour is spreading that the infant son of the last king was not murdered with his father, as has hitherto been thought, but is living and will raise his standard against the tyrant.

To his surprise, Ahmed, son of the Keeper of the Records for Laisha South, learns that he is the missing Prince. Though he is at the "highly impressionable age of fifteen and has been devoted to his supposed father, Ahmed does not appear to be emotionally upset by this news, and

no more than dazed by the unprepared and semi-public way in which it is broken to him. The poor foster father, who has already become a personality in the reader's eyes, is abruptly discarded from the story. This is not the only weakness in the early stages of the book.

Another is in the Manhood Trials which Ahmed now has to undergo. The country around the Laishas is surprisingly lush, with thick forest in the hinterland—surprisingly, because one involuntarily associates desert and mountains with the kind of people who inhabit Shalandria. Their names are Arabic, many of them actually taken from the Arabian Nights—they apparently follow the Prophet, and the illustrations by the author's brother are very Middle Eastern. When the action moves south it settles more happily into the kind of country you would expect, but the close juxtaposition of two such different environments remains a little odd. The character of the Manhood Trials, too, is an uneasy cross between tribal Africa and ancient Greece.

When the action moves south, however, the author finds his feet, and Ahmed goes through a series of adventures that derive, one feels, from an extensive reading of Middle Eastern history and legend. There is something of the Arabian Nights about them, something of the literature of the Crusades, something, even of Lawrence of Arabia, but all distilled into something which is wholly the author's own.

It is difficult to tell whether *Ahmed, Prince of Ashira* is intended as anything more than a straightforward adventure story. There are hints that an allegory or parable may be intended, but they are no more than hints and do not get in the way of one's enjoyment.

Altogether this is an enjoyable and interesting excursion into a new field, and it is to be hoped that Mr. Wildsmith may elaborate into further books some of the legends of Shalandria only suggested here.

Yet more problems

Problems of youth—from illegitimate parenthood to reluctant stepdaughters—such are the motive themes of most of the novels below. The

Handy lives in an isolated house, a famous pianist, he has near the tales hold our interest too. Yet anywhere alone, ridden on at the only book that one might expect played with other children, go to find in print a generation hence is school, handled a dog. What the one which—though problem-involved in a car accident and laden enough—could not be despised a summer with reabsorbed as a *roman à these* at all. Unwilling he enters a world. *Flambers* in *Summer*, the final book in the *Flambers* trilogy, is a first time. At the same time, three-dimensional narrative in worried about his parents, see the central tradition of English fiction; up to fifty years ago, at least, it is very happy. But he does not young.

leaving what is to him not Christina, the heroine, first normal world. Music is his life, appeared as an orphan girl of 12 or neither likes nor dislikes the, so (a future heiress, though) in the new it imposes on him, it is rough, hasty, womanless household impossible to think of any other of her brutal Uncle Russell, a companionably. But he has learnt to wait in waiting for her arrival his experience of this summer giant cousin Mark. Two novels later, happiness, as well as the anxiety in *Flambers* in *Summer*, we see her made then mark on his at the age of 21. She is a war widow personality, and we leave him, the year is 1916: the early luck of new depths in his mind as a her aviator husband Will, Mark's of them, with the implication that younger brother, could not last. is beginning to emerge from she has money (from her simple infant prodigy into inheritance) for the first time in her life. But she is alone.

Even Mark has been posted "Missing". She returns to Flambers, finds it weed-grown and derelict, with only two old servants in occupation. The very stables, once the heart of the place, have been emptied for the wars. With a drive and authority that she hardly knew she possessed (they are native, thought, to University Press 18s (19.27) her kind, she starts to bring life to the place; enlisting such meagre help as can be found, she has fields cleared, ploughed and sown. The discovery of her own pregnancy does not alter her plans. To people the new Flambers, she tracks down the maid Violet whom Mark seduced and abandoned, and "buys" from her for adoption the six-year-old bastard boy. She seeks out Dick, the stablehand, once her friend and mentor, himself dismissed for lying on her behalf to save a horse from the knackers. Tubercular and ill, he consents at last to advise on the work of the farm. Christina's child, a girl, is born with the minimum of fuss; then—at harvest time, the bright point of success—Mark returns. The real owner of Flambers, he finds a situation which largely enrages him, and which he can destroy at a touch. Marriage (which he still desires with Christina) might be, for her, a solution of sorts—but is it the true solution for the Christina that she has become?

The scene, the time itself, so different from our own in its codes and emphases—these have an undoubted value for younger readers now. But the trilogy's real achievement is Christina's progress, her discovery of herself and her unconditional sympathies within this special setting. So, though the present volume is complete as a novel, it is best to take it as the conclusion of the whole.

The Runaway Summer is a skilful though variation of the familiar "When formula": a girl and two boys; a mixture of social (and class) backgrounds; a hunt a place; a hint of political drama in the machinery. Mary (11), unlike her namesake in *The Secret Garden*, is moody and resentful. Her worldly parents, "always travelling and banging doors" and in process of divorce, have left with grandfather and old-fashioned Aunt Alice in their house by the sea. In her sullen and angry way, she makes a friend, a nice, responsible boy called Simon (a woman's son, by the way), who, though other self-assumed burdens, his unavailing best to keep in for an untidy and noisy family of larger siblings. Mary asks Simon's in hitting a Pakistani boy, presently an illegal immigrant, and she has found on the beach

they take him to Simon's secret haunt—a tiny island on a weed-grown lake in a neglected estate near by. Though the boy informs them from time to time that his wealthy uncle is waiting for him in London (in "Buckingham Palace Terrace") his casual air is taken not for assurance but for fantasy.

Still, the relationship of the three children is excellently caught—the misunderstandings, the moments of rapport. The adults—all but the suave, amused Pakistani uncle the does turn out to live near Buckingham Palace—are less convincing. The immigrant motif places the tale in our immediate time. But Aunt Alice (who, by rough calculation, can't be much more than 40) could hardly be more out of touch with the world today. Moreover, no kindness of heart could ever overcome, for a child, her physical unattractiveness so precisely laid down by Miss Bawden at the start. Simon's family, too, wavering at different social levels, seem dashed off at different times of writing: this was less avoidable when novels appeared in serial form, but today suggests either haste or irresolute vision. Of course, if the tale were less effective, these flaws would be less worth mentioning.

Like other recent novels by its author, *The Whistling Boy* offers a dream-like first person narration by a brooding, self-centred adolescent girl passing through a "difficult" phase. The sea-washed setting, too, is intentionally part of the drama; and again, as in earlier books, the girl's restlessness catches something supernatural in the air, a link, perhaps, with the place's bygone history. To make such a narrator likeable—to avoid the commonplaces and even vulgarities of the private thoughts of a heroine of this kind—is far from easy, as earlier books have shown, but in the present novel one senses a greater caution about these pitfalls. Kirsty's trouble is that, unlike her younger twin brothers, she cannot accept her new stepmother, so near in age to herself.

I was the odd one, my father had Lois, the twins had each other, and I—had no one... I hated Lois, I hated her. I bore her a terrible resentment (for taking my mother's place... for taking the three of us under her wing, and because my father loved her...)

To escape from the situation she leaves for a fruit-picking holiday in a Norfolk coastal village; and here, in the happy summer days, it seems that nothing can trouble her. But the place is haunted (for those who can hear his reedy tune) by the spirit of a long-dead flute-playing French boy, a Huguenot exile who drowned himself; and Kirsty's new attractive friend Jake, the doctor's son, is one whom the lonely ghost tries to lure into the sea. The old ratcatcher, she finds, had heard him in his far-off youth, and has remained ever since a solitary. "Oid a gone with him, too, he spoke so soft and sweet. O loved his gentle ways and his whistling tune." Finally, Kirsty discovers not only a cache of despairing seventeenth-century love-letters (is it ungrateful to notice the modern orthography of the French?) but the whistler's old wooden flute itself. And when these relics are drawn away into the floods, the poor ghost seems assuaged; the strange spell on Jake is lifted, and Kirsty's happiness in their love makes her understand Lois at last.

Veronica Ganz may seem on a fairly slight theme, but it has a quality that makes it worth reading more than once. Veronica is 13, and too tall. "Shame on you, shame, you big bully", adults are apt to cry if they see her taking defensive action. Nevertheless, few of her classmates "would dare to tangle with her." Generally one loud slap in the face would put them in their place. "But one tormentor eludes her—a new-comer, a small neat goat-like boy called Peter. Wedemeyer, and to catch and humiliate him obsesses her thoughts. Yet—lit by something of the absurd and wayward intensity of a Carson McCullers heroine—she

never fails to hold our sympathy as she rages and dreams her way through the unaccommodating days. The background characters, too, fall believably into place: Mum, explosive and overworked, the mild, resigned stepfather, the prissy threesome sister Mary Rose (11), who dreams of a satin counterpane, the frail devoted little stepbrother Stan. And when Veronica does come face to face with Peter at the end (and he simply won't believe her sad complaint: "I just wish I was small like everybody else"), she makes the Blake-like discovery that the loss of an enemy can be as devastating as the loss of a friend. Her triumph is, maybe, that she remains with both.

A world of time separates *The Longest Weekend* from the *Flambers* sequence. This is a novel about a birth out of wedlock—not a new thing in itself, but new in the current climate of ideas. The story of how it all came about is recalled in a series of flashbacks during a snowy April weekend in Berwickshire, where Eileen (20), with her three-year-old daughter Gay, has agreed at last to see again, after a long and furious silence, the father, medical student Joel. It had all been her fault, really, she hadn't liked to admit to him that she hadn't yet been to the Clinic. Unreasonably, but understandably, she had raged and laid the whole blame on Joel, and he had accepted it. In his teasing way he had offered to marry her, too—but not in the way she wanted it, somehow. She hadn't wanted the baby, she hadn't wanted an abortion, either. Her parents had been unconqueringly helpful. They were

schoolteacher, of a specially dedicated sort... [They] joined in campaigns against streaming, selection and corporal punishment, and were continually writing letters to The Scotsman, the New Statesman, and the Times Educational Supplement, uncovering scandals and suggesting sensible solutions.

Their holidays are spent "in jeans and shabby jerseys, exploring Norman churches in East Anglia". Nobody, really, had been thwarting or "difficult" but herself.

The book has certainly shrewdness, as well as a briskness of humour, as in the opening, for instance, where Eileen and little Gay are setting out for Berwickshire, each dressed in the manner laid down by the girl-magazines; the same magazines have furnished Eileen with reassuring thoughts (not found in herself) on the beauty of motherhood. The absence of a husband, the completing item in the imaginary picture, is not disclosed until the chapter's end.

Moreover, the two young people are sharply observed and convincingly seen throughout. But, away from the central idea, the scene is thin. The adults are pasteboard, and the parents in particular—caricatures at that. Because of this, Eileen's mother's besotted desire to adopt the child herself rings almost unpleasantly. The child, by the way, like so many fictional children, totally lacks appeal: it is always hard to ally a touching charm with rude health and the noisy pursuit of insistent shallow whims. Dickens was wiser when he made his little ones pale, secret, quietly spoken, well behaved, short-lived. Even the thesis itself is not wholly clear. To lie or not to lie? To go to the Clinic or not? Parents are left in even greater doubts about their role. Eileen, with no particular gifts that we can see, is Everygirl, more or less; but Joel, clever, attractive and basically responsible too, are not so frequently found. Alas.

K. M. PEYTON: *Flambers in Summer*. Illustrated by Victor G. Ambrus. Oxford University Press, 18s. (19.27) (12.4.)

NINA BAWDEN: *The Runaway Summer*. Gollancz, 18s. (575.00337.5.)

RUTH M. ARTHUR: *The Whistling Boy*. Illustrated by Margery Gill, Gollancz, 18s. (575.00331.6.)

MARILYN SACHS: *Veronica Ganz*. Macdonald, 18s. (356.02839.9.)

HONOR ARNOLD: *The Longest Weekend*. Hamish Hamilton, 18s. (241.01769.6.)

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WORLD'S WORK
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Rewards for the new age

THE SCIENCE-FICTION story for children has for some time seemed the lined descendant of the boys' "Reward". In its emphasis on action, its rudimentary characterization, its naive values, it looked back not to Wells and Jules Verne but to Colonel Brereton and Herbert Strang.

Not now. It may be that the pressure of events, which makes his imaginings either commonplace or absurd, have stimulated the SF writer to a different kind of creative activity. The cover design of Angus MacVicar's *Super Nova* and the *Rogue Satellite*, as well as the title itself, seems to offer no more than a Captain Johns story in modern technological dress. The reader is soon put right. For Captain Johns the negroes began at Calais. There are no national or racial prejudices on board *Super Nova*, or at least none until sinister influences revive, but not permanently, long buried antipathies. The old "Reward" writers were reluctant to acknowledge the existence of an opposite sex. Mr. MacVicar's space lifeboat carries in her crew a lively and unashamedly sexy nurse called Janie. This is a "Reward" for the new age, an age which demands a great deal more of its writers in integrity as well as technique. Mr. MacVicar's story is excellent of its kind; it is encouraging to realize that it is also typical.

The besetting sin of most SF is its humourlessness; there is precious little gaiety in space. Robert Heinlein is the exception. He is so completely the master of his medium that he can afford to make fun of it. *Space Family Stone* is, for the most part, an agreeable send-up of the spaceways. The Stones wisecrack their way from planet to planet, doing a little trade here and there, tending the sick (Miss Stone is a doctor) but mainly enjoying themselves. Grandmother Hazel, who is "the only juvenile delinquent old enough for a geriatrics clinic", justifies her decision to go on to Titan: "The dull one stay home—and the bright ones stir around and see what trouble they can dig up. It's the human pattern." Grandmother is beyond question one of the bright ones, and so is the baby, Buster, who has all the youngest's firestorminess and who is a chess genius. So are the twins, who try to sell second-hand bicycles on Mars, and Father, who sometimes seems a bit about fun, beyond the knock-about fun, beyond the quiet heroism, there is a sense of adventure and—rarest of all ingredients in SF—a feeling of wonder. Notwithstanding the bureaucracy which bedevils the planets, the Stones believe that there are fine things yet to see, and they take with them, carefully doled out to control its alarming fertility, one of the compulsively loving and lovable flat-cuts of Mars.

There is nothing to laugh about in Andre Norton's *Dark Piper*. Mr. Heinlein's universe is largely tamed. There are no villains, no wars. Miss Norton shows a planet isolated by war and all but annihilated in the aftermath of war. A professional

soldier, Griss, Lugard, returns to Beltane and tries to alert the pacifist government to the dangers of space. In vain. Homeless adventures bomb the capital of Beltane out of existence. They kill the survivors with an unstable virus which destroys them with its backlash. But before the disaster Griss, like a benevolent pied piper, takes the children of the colony underground and they survive.

Miss Norton has not always been easy to read. Her imagination is so strong and so way-out that she sometimes fails to communicate with her readers who cannot, without more help, share her vision. *Dark Piper* is the most direct and in consequence the most powerful of her stories. The little world that she invokes is convincing and strangely beautiful. Her

child characters have depth. She draws a tiny community together by a disaster beyond comprehension, but a core made up of individuals, not so moving, so intensely might make a good introduction to the conclusion that this is not SF at all but a fantasy, in the appeal of C. S. Lewis, explores the mystery of the spirit.

Angus MacVicar's *Super Nova* (Penguin, 1968, 10s. 6d.) is a Paperback, Leicester, Brock Press, 4s. (140,041935). Robert A. Heinlein's *Space Family Stone* (Gollancz, 21s. 5s. 6d.) and Andre Norton's *Dark Piper* (Gollancz, 21s. 5s. 6d.)

The lure of adventure

THERE have been many great mountaineering books; the historic ascents of the Alps and of course the records of the battle for Everest, and the great Himalayan peaks have been long familiar to older readers. But now there is a new era of climbing, with more mechanical aids, and more deliberate attempts: not to achieve summits by routes already known, but to challenge the great north faces, once thought insuperable. Of Alps already climbed. To read about these may interest younger readers than familiar with early conquests, and might even send them back to read of those earlier feats when men pitted themselves against heights and conditions hitherto unknown. In *North Face: The Second Conquest of the Alps*, Walter Unsworth describes some of the famous climbs of modern times on the great rock and ice faces, the tragedies of the 1930s, on the Eiger and Grandes Jorasses, and the triumphant winter ascent of the Eigerwand. The striking photographs are by Chris Bonington, one of Britain's leading climbers.

This is not a book for very young readers, as it needs some grasp to follow it. But *Flies Up Everest* with coloured illustrations by Raymond Briggs, is as much picture as text; it has a good plan of the mountain showing the route and the camps of the victorious expedition of 1953. The story only tells of the final stage by Hillary and Tenzing and is very brief but clear. The same goes for *Shackleton's Epic Voyage*, with illustrations by the same artist: the story of Shackleton's rescue voyage in the James Caird. In both books the print is large but often superimposed on the coloured pictures, which does not make for easy reading. Black print upon a grey or blue sea or mountainside is not really a good idea.

Anthologies are a tempting form of reading, leading onwards for those who may not have the patience for a long story; also there is always the chance of finding some

extract which may lead the reader back to the original. *Flies Up Everest* we have one mounting and exploration; there is a letter from Edward Whymper, account of the disaster of the Matterhorn, Fridtjof Nansen's long journey in the Arctic, and Admiral Peary's account of a winter alone in the Arctic. But there are also some of the two most exciting escapes: "The King's Escape", dated 1680, got up into a tree, which had been lopped three or four years before and grown out again very bushy, so that it could not be seen. Here we stayed a day; and I escape first. . . . by Winston Churchill. A thrilling account of Winston's escape from imprisonment in 1899. "A Hundred Children" is the story of the boy by the missionary Gladys A. with orphaned children who Japanese invaded China.

Treasure and Treasure Hunt mainly fiction, though there is an authentic account by G. C. C. Danham of the recent gold from the White Star Lighthouse sunk in 1917. Post-Stevenson and Hugo are among fiction writers.

WALTER UNSWORTH: *North Face: The Second Conquest of the Alps*, with world and photographs by Bonington. (Hutchinson, 1969, 10s. 6d.)

SHACKLETON'S EPIC VOYAGE AND RAYMOND BRIGGS: *Flies Up Everest*, 18 pages, 10s. 6d. (Hutchinson, 1969, 10s. 6d.)

DAVID HOWARTH (Editor): *Escapes*, Hamish Hamilton, 21s. (241,91422.1)

RICHARD ARMSTRONG (Editor): *Treasure and Treasure Hunt*, Hamish Hamilton, 21s. (241,91742.3)

Mrs. Brinsmead indulges in too often:

The strange, shy creature, I had been a throwback in time, so that was surely as the Dawn Horse had been the primeval feral Eohippus that had trodden by Man's footsteps when the world was young and innocent.

It is reasonable to say that any child attracted by that first paragraph will like the book. And not, not.

These five adults (for although the book is labelled for 10 to 14 year olds, the characters are all really adults), marooned on their paradise island, feel at first that they do not want to leave. The elderly widow, Mrs. Mulvaney, misses nothing but a good cup of tea. On the island they have freedom and peace, work and food. And there is "no place like an island for doing a bit of thinking". But they begin to realize that nothing can be solved by running away. And those who have their lives to live must have the guts to get back and live them. Only Mrs. Mulvaney is allowed an island grave.

It is a perpetually interesting situation, of course, a group of people, isolated, feeding for themselves, getting to know each other and themselves. The new book has a kinder view of human nature than *Lord of the Flies*, for instance. The five learn to trust and accept each other. The drunkard, George, finds he is a different man without his drink; the Arab refugee, Shem, learns to wear his knife openly. There is much of interest here but children need to recognize and identify. Ivan Southey's account of a winter alone in the Arctic. But there are also some of the two most exciting escapes: "The King's Escape", dated 1680, got up into a tree, which had been lopped three or four years before and grown out again very bushy, so that it could not be seen. Here we stayed a day; and I escape first. . . . by Winston Churchill. A thrilling account of Winston's escape from imprisonment in 1899. "A Hundred Children" is the story of the boy by the missionary Gladys A. with orphaned children who Japanese invaded China.

Nan Chauncey's new book, *The Lighthouse Keeper's Son*, is even more of a disappointment after *Little Lights*. It is meant for rather younger children. Chesey is nearly ten; Lizzie is thirteen. He is also a loner, but he is a cardboard character compared with Lizzie, and his family the unforgivingly annoying small sister, the mother who understands so little that she thinks a rare shell can be replaced by something bought are by Mrs. Chauncey's own high standards cardboard people too. There is none of the warmth of the Lorraine books, none of the intensity and involvement of a book like *Tangara*. In the new book, Mrs. Chauncey never focuses entirely on a place or a situation. Nothing much happens except that the family moves from Lighthouse to fruit market, to another lighthouse and another. It is only at the end that the low-pressure narrative gathers pace

and finally resolves itself into a neat little last paragraph:

So that was all right: the cyclone had passed, Chesey had his dog, his shell was safe, and he had made a new friend.

Mary Patchett's new book has some rather thin characters, too, but this is less surprising in a book whose appeal is largely in its scientific detail and its setting under the sea. The Dexter family leave a convention I farm on land to live under the water and establish the first farm for the Australian Fisheries Department. The whole project is carefully described and admirably motivated. They must first increase the plankton yield with nutrient salts. "Men should not colonise the sea as they had the earth, advancing as egotistical fools with one idea: to

kill." The book is better than its rather crude illustrations would suggest but there is an unconvincing plot. The ignorant local fishermen go to extraordinary lengths to wreck the scheme and are only foiled by a trusty dolphin. The whole book is rather muddled, so that, like one of the characters in the story, one is "disappointed at not being surprised by anything".

F. M. ELLIS: *The Children of Clearwater Bay*, illustrated by Gath Tappin, Macmillan, 21s. (333,10518.4). H. F. BRINSMEAD: *Isle of the Sea Horse*, illustrated by Peter Farmer, Oxford University Press, 18s. (119,271307.8). NANI CHAUNCEY: *The Lighthouse Keeper's Son*, illustrated by Victor G. Ambrus, Oxford University Press, 16s. (19,271303.1). MARY PATCHETT: *Farm Beneath the Sea*, Harrap, 20s. (245,59682.8).

Yonge misses

CHARLOTTE YONGE died in 1901. Even before her death the era of the bread-and-butter miss was over. In her late novels she lamented the fact herself: the disappearance of the earnest conscientious girl for whom most of her books catered, the fourteen to eighteen-year-old, no longer a child, not yet a woman, who in the quiet solitude of her schoolroom at home was preparing herself to meet the world.

There is plenty of incident in *River of Gold*, Fay Gorie's book about the Transvaal goldfields in the 1870s, but the author, intensively though she has read up the period, lacks the ability to make a novel out of it. Tom Maxwell, another orphan, arrives in Pretoria to join his aunt and uncle and cousin Samantha. They took to the goldfields, are seized by gold-fever, and recover from it. With enough gold behind them for comfort, Tom decides that his destiny is to preserve wild-life, and Samantha that hers is to marry the young Boer Christian Le Roux, who although he hunts animals loves them too. In the Ballantyne style the book is packed with information about natural and political history, geography, gold-mining. But Ballantyne's story-telling technique is not there. Despite its subject the book remains curiously tame, not do any of the characters come to life. The author's descriptions of animals and scenery are perhaps the best things in the book, together with the Paps illustrations—which are splendid.

Fleanor Spence's *Imberio Road* is a sequel to her earlier *The Switherby Pilgrims*. It follows up the fortunes of the ten orphans from the village of Switherby who were taken by the vicar's sister, Miss Arabella Braithwaite, to begin a new life in Australia. Here we see them established on their farmstead in New South Wales. The early pioneering days, which gave the first book much of its interest, are over now, and Miss Arabella is trying to plan for the orphans' future. Cassie, with whom the book is chiefly concerned, goes as a governess to the daughter of a

wiped out in wholesale slaughter by the ignorant peasants. He meets enemy and prejudice, naturally enough, but gradually brings one of the most skilful hunters to share his point of view. There are exciting bear-hunts and expeditions into the forests, and plenty of drama in human relationships too. The way in which the prejudices of the two main characters slowly disappear, as they come to know and respect each other, is most convincing. The development of their children's friendship is equally well described. We are left with the heartening impression that good sense and high ideals can and will surmount the ignorance and prejudices of primitive men, even in the far and frozen north.

IAN NIAL: *The Owl Hunters*. Heinemann, 20s. (434,95389.2). JOYCE STRANGER: *Rusty*. Collins, 21s. B. BARTOS-HÖPPNER: *Hunters of Siberia*. Translated by Anthea Bell. Illustrated by Peter Wyvorsk. Leicester: Brookhamp Press, 25s. (340,04219.2).

And Also...

Cecily Niven: *Jack and Fitz Longmuir*, 30s. (382,64032.0). This will interest adults who read *Jack of the Bushveld* in their youth and want to hear more about the author. Illustrations and setting of the book. Compiled by the author's daughter.



Scarlet Sails

ALEXANDER GREEN

The first English edition of a Russian story of immense popularity by Alexander Grinyevsky, who always wrote as Alexander Green. Of this classic sea story and fairytale, a *Home Book Magazine* reviewer commented: "Seldom does one find a book that seems so perfect." Illustrated by Amette MacArthur Onslow.

My Donkey Benjamin

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A delightful photographic story from Germany about a little girl and a baby donkey. The setting is Mediterranean. Ages 4 to 7.

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COLIN THIELE

A contemporary story of the tuna-fishing fleet in Port Lincoln, South Australia. Illustrated. Ages 12 and up.

Do You Remember What Happened

JEAN CHAPMAN Illustrated by Edward Ardizzone

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Half a world away

It is odd that in this batch of books from the other side of the world, the one that stands out as the most satisfying is the only one by an unknown name. The distinguished tells us that E. M. Ellis wrote *The Children of Clearwater Bay* because there were too few books available for children on the subject of the early history of New Zealand. Purists would certainly suspect such a didactic motive. Moreover the writer apparently felt no great compulsion. She admits that, if she hadn't broken a leg, she would probably "never have got round to actually putting anything on paper".

Yet the book works in a way that none of the others do. Miss Ellis never for one moment falls into the trap of loading her story with too

much factual detail. The historical situation and the local colour are completely absorbed in the exciting narrative.

The story is set a century ago. There are obvious dangers in making one's heroes white children and their enemies a coloured race. But Miss Ellis's tact is impeccable. Moreover, it is founded on historical truth. One of the most remarkable things about the struggle in New Zealand at this time was that it never entirely a war of race against race. There were always some "friendly" Maoris, and intertribal rivalry was an important factor. The whole complex situation is lightly suggested. But what matters is the six children and what happens to them as they travel alone by boat and by land in search of help and safety. Their courage and enterprise,

their quarrel and fears are completely credible.

The other three books are largely set in the Great Barrier Reef area. This is all they have in common, and even this is not much if one realizes that the covers 80,000 square miles of Brinsmead's new book is far more ambitious than *The Children of Clearwater Bay*. It is also more pretentious. The first part sums up all that is to come. Emmo looks back on the summer she had spent on a "dampish" island where she had grown close to a handful of ill-assorted people, as they did their own thing, and she had come to know their moods and tempers—and them—to know herself.

That same first paragraph is a foretaste of the sort of

Natural settings

IAN NIAL'S *The Owl Hunters* survives a hackneyed plot by keeping its feet on the ground and its mind on the job. The style is brisk and full of humour. The heroes, Billy and Albert, are lively children: real enough to be incompetent and scared in between bursts of bravery and brief daydreams of fame and fortune. They are hunting for a baby owl in an old graveyard when they see a gang of crooks pretending to be mourners. The owls are forgotten and the boys set about foiling the crooks and regaining the coffin full of stolen money. The crooks are sly and unimportant, but the boys' allies are entertaining and lively: likeable characters: Billy's father, comfortably semi-occupied in managing a ditch, the village policeman who is not so slow as he seems, and the charming Mr. Tapper, unambiguously nursing along his ancient sheep which ought to have been on the scrapheap years ago.

To say that *Rusty*, by Joyce Stranger, is the old-fashioned type of animal story, with Nature's teeth and claws as red as ever and no holds barred, is no disparagement. In fact, it is a realistic approach combined with thorough knowledge of the wild and the people who live there, makes a powerful and impressive story. Joyce Stranger is a completely honest writer with her characters, and they are all the more attrac-

ive for such treatment. The heroine, Jeannie, slowly recovering from the loss of her fiancé, has a passion for animals, and caring for the orphaned deer Rusty, as well as other destitute creatures, gradually heals her distress and brings her to a new and satisfying love in the end. Rusty himself is no semi-human pet, but a real stag with dangerous habits and barely suppressed instincts. The humans are solid and likeable. There is nothing fey or whimsical about Lexie, the old recluse, or Jeannie's father Angus, a man of few words but great integrity. The story is full of excitement and though like any honest animal story from *Black Beauty* onwards, it is bound to be tragic, there is also plenty of humour, and the ending is full of hope for Jeannie and her father and the whole of their village.

Another striking story, and a most unusual one, is *Hunters of Siberia*, by Barbara Bartos-Höppner, translated with great fluency by Anthea Bell. The snow and wolves and wretched exiles which make up the average picture of Siberia are all here, but the author knows so much more that the story reads like a first-hand account of Siberian life fifty years ago. The theme, however, is surprisingly modern: An official forestry commissioner, whose early passion for hunting has become an equally strong desire to conserve wild life, comes to Siberia determined to save the animals that are being

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¹¹ Some pointers for those who can choose between Oxford and Cambridge. These leaflets are available at 1s each from Publications Department, Times Newspapers Limited, Printing House Square, London, E.C.4.

Earl Lonelyhearts

Dear Bertrand Russell . . . Edited by Barry Fomborg and Ronald Kessler. 196pp. Allen and Unwin. 35s.

Even those whose writings come before the public in a very modest way receive a certain amount of correspondence from their readers: some of it in green ink with Biblical references, some of it abusive, some of it calculated to evoke shame about ill-considered utterance. It is thus not altogether surprising that Bertrand Russell, with his very special eminence and all-inclusive scope of interest, should receive an average of 100 letters a day: for the most part, presumably, from people who do not know him. It is a daunting thought none the less. As it turns out, Russell's practice is a lesson for us all. This selection from his correspondence with the general public between 1950 and 1968 shows that, if he is not always absolutely factual, he does write back, and not only to the more interesting-looking of those who write to him.

From his time at Cambridge onwards Russell has been renowned for instantaneous sparkle. *Dear Bertrand Russell* shows that this power is not exercised only where it will be noticed by many people or where personal affection is a motive. A Señor Munoz, for example, writing in 1962, was treated to an admirable parody of a leading article from *The Times* on the outbreak of the Third World War. "While the recent hostilities must be considered regrettable from any point of view there are yet certain grounds for cautious optimism . . ." As well as this kind of genial prodigality Russell displays unwearying thought-

fulness and consideration for his correspondents: the fiancée of a young Italian philosopher killed in a car crash who is trying to get his writings published, a young Chinese in Vancouver suffering from racial and intellectual isolation, a lovesick swain to whom Russell recommends Donne and going up to Cambridge, someone feeling guilt about masturbation.

Another admirable feature of Russell's letters is their invariable honesty and freedom from evasion. He rejects false accounts of what he has said and done but readily admits error and hastens where such charges are just. He does not water down his considered opinions for the sake of compromise. To someone who writes that premarital relations are all right if you are in love, he replies that "sex is a need and does not require intense love for its gratification . . . Abstinence only provides, in my opinion, a later difficulty . . ." At times he applauds independence of mind and resistance to authority, but only in conjunction with a recognition of fallibility. He is prompt to recognize his own limitations.

I hardly know what to say to you about how an agnostic should bring up children who will have to live in a Christian country. I did not have my own children baptized and let them know my own attitude toward religion. The result was not exactly as I should have wished. Two of them have become earnest Anglicans.

Finally, of course, there are the jokes. To an old age pensioner who "does a little sketching as a hobby, and would esteem it a great honour if you would autograph the enclosed sketch", he replies: "I have signed

the sketch, but I very much hope that you will reconsider the shape of the nose".

Those who edit the writings of Russell in a way that involves the display of a good deal of their own prose alongside his are taking a dangerous risk. But the English of Mr. Feinberg and Mr. Kessler does not need Russell's beside it to show how dreadful it is. These letters, they say, cover "a delightful spectrum of his personality": "at a time", they write, "when the bomb came to symbolize the atavistic forces poised against mankind, Bertrand Russell proved to be the very antithesis, looming large as a champion of humanity": "the driving curiosity of the public", they observe, "is a particular fate reserved for the famous, and Bertrand Russell has been no exception", and so on. In its confusion and Frankensteinian artificiality this kind of writing is the stylistic equivalent of illiteracy.

Not that the editors are unaware of their responsibilities. They say that Russell formulates his views precisely, with warmth and humour, "regardless of to whom they are addressed". It is possible, too, to suspect an editorial hand in a passage where Russell is presented as writing, "their activities rebounded to the credit of the Church as an institution", where the irony of the verb is quite out of place. But Russell easily survives the embrace of his editors' verbal grotesqueries, and this little book has some claim to join La Rochefoucauld and Logan Pearsall Smith's *Tricks* on any well-provided bathroom bookshelf.

C. A. VAN PEURSEN: *Ludwig Wittgenstein*. Translated by Rex Ambler. 120pp. Faber and Faber. 30s. PETER WINCH (Editor): *Studies in the Philosophy of Wittgenstein*. 210pp. Routledge and Kegan Paul. 42s.

The ideas of the great philosophers do not always lend themselves to summary exposition. Where the detail and subtle texture of the intellectual fabric are omitted, the philosophical threads tend to look barren and bare. Wittgenstein's thought presents special difficulties for summary, and introductory treatment; much of it seems submerged under the surface of the actual words, and particularly in his later philosophy, he abstains from stating his concerns in general terms. Moreover Wittgenstein presents us with two different philosophies which are intricately related.

Various attempts at giving an elementary and summary account of his work have so far not been altogether successful. C. A. van Peursen gives us a new attempt of this kind; unfortunately he does not do any better than his predecessors at the unenviable task. The account he gives of Wittgenstein's thought contains too many serious mistakes to be acceptable, and even where his exposition is essentially on the right lines one does not always feel happy, since the exposition tends to be unduly obscure. What is more important, Professor van Peursen does not really succeed in integrating the details of his account into a coherent and comprehensive picture. After reading his book, the reader will find that the outlines of Wittgenstein's thought have become any clearer. An introduction that fails at this (admittedly difficult) task must be written off as a failure.

Studies in the Philosophy of Wittgenstein is, at the same time, more and less ambitious than *Ludwig Wittgenstein*. It is more ambitious in that the seven contributors to the volume are clearly concerned with breaking new ground in our understanding of Wittgenstein, less ambitious in that it does not try to present an overall picture of his philosophy. Instead the book is devoted to the detailed study of specific points in Wittgenstein's thought. In the introduction Peter Winch tries to link the seven papers in the volume, but the link seems thin.

The most stimulating contribution to the volume is, no doubt, David Sturges's essay, "Wittgenstein on Mathematics". Mr. Sturges compares Wittgenstein's style with a "powerful stroboscope, bewildering the intelligence with alternating brilliance and darkness and often causing a complete blur". It is, perhaps, not unfair to say that this description applies to Mr. Sturges's style as much as to Wittgenstein's. The details of his account are often bewildering and some of his references to Wittgenstein's own words totally perplexing. Mr. Sturges succeeds, however, in giving us a picture of Wittgenstein's continuing fascination with mathematics and in showing the continuity of development in his thinking about mathematical

problems. He succeeds, more, in showing the radical break between Wittgenstein's philosophy of mathematics from that of Russell. He does all this omitting to point out the fact that Wittgenstein's understanding of actual mathematics, more extensive account of the Montefeltro other contribution to the volume, which is the author of the standard work on the building—of live philosophy.

John W. Cook's paper, "Wittgenstein's thought as a clear exposition of Wittgenstein's thought", is well known in the philosophy of language, but the introduction and the chapter on the first phase have been things which are essentially not about a quarter, and 100 of and inaccessible to other the 457 photographs have been Wittgenstein maintains the introduction, where the Italian part of a language that the introduction examines the part Federico from others. The expression of the design of the palace, "two-thirds" can therefore be something of which only one is aware. Wittgenstein's explanation that we ascribe to ourselves and to others according to presence of certain criteria because of the occurrence of unobservable events in the mind. These criteria are often false, and they are generally accepted by the outside observer.

This position has often been called a behaviourist one, precisely, as a form of logical behaviourism. Professor Sturges, convincingly that the authors of these two new studies of Cézanne — Mr. Lindsay and Mr. Elgar — both want to show that mental states are not reducible to physical states, and that the latter's subject-matter and style is not that of a revolution in conjunction with the mental states and even with a zig-zag of anguish and exaltation that describes the relation (Lindsay) which his letters gave to Zola, who then married her: nor for a great deal of erratic handling of dates. Thus he writes of

Manet (sic) buying paintings by Cézanne in 1887, whereas he had been dead four years and never owned one anyway, and of Gauguin buying six of his paintings in the mid-1890s, when he was penniless and in Tahiti. No less bewildering are M. Elgar's statements that Matisse and the Fauves were "later" than Delaunay in "following Cézanne's example", or that the great "Montagne Ste. Victoire" of c. 1886 in the Courtauld collection was "done between 1890 and 1906", while the dates M. Elgar gives for individual works in many of his captions—e.g. 1866-70 for "Cézanne's Father reading *L'Événement*", when it is recorded as having been seen in 1866, and *L'Événement* ceased in 1867, or 1886-90 for "Montaigne in Provence"—suggested that M. Elgar is not much concerned for the niceties of art history.

Indeed, if one may judge by some of the strange opinions he voices as his text advances, M. Elgar has never really come to grips with Cézanne either as a man or as an artist. Thus he accuses Cézanne of "childishness" and refers to his "southern need to shock", both of which accusations are grotesque. Elsewhere he writes off Cézanne's *couillarde* works—among which are several great canvases—as "generally mediocre", and says of the whole period from 1865 to 1872 that "his subjects are only excuses for balancing masses, giving density to material and arranging forms in accordance with conventional optical". It seems incredible that an art-critic can overlook so glaringly the deep emotions, the physical exaltation, and the tireless wrestling with technical means to achieve self-expression which these paintings unmistakably proclaim. However, M. Elgar's myopia does not stop there, for he also singles out for special commendation a "Self-Portrait" in watercolour whose authenticity has often been seriously doubted, while remarking that a splendid version in the oil of the same subject and of the same date is "not as good". There seems to be no aspect of this volume really deserving of praise, more especially since the plates, both black-and-white and colour, are poor.

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Unsummarizable Palace of the Montefeltros

PASQUALE ROTONDI: *The Ducal Palace of Urbino*. 111pp. Tiranti. £4 10s.

Surprisingly, this is the first comprehensive account of the Montefeltro other contribution to the volume, which is the author of the standard work on the building—of live philosophy.

John W. Cook's paper, "Wittgenstein's thought as a clear exposition of Wittgenstein's thought", is well known in the philosophy of language, but the introduction and the chapter on the first phase have been things which are essentially not about a quarter, and 100 of and inaccessible to other the 457 photographs have been Wittgenstein maintains the introduction, where the Italian part of a language that the introduction examines the part Federico from others. The expression of the design of the palace, "two-thirds" can therefore be something of which only one is aware. Wittgenstein's explanation that we ascribe to ourselves and to others according to presence of certain criteria because of the occurrence of unobservable events in the mind. These criteria are often false, and they are generally accepted by the outside observer.

This position has often been called a behaviourist one, precisely, as a form of logical behaviourism. Professor Sturges, convincingly that the authors of these two new studies of Cézanne — Mr. Lindsay and Mr. Elgar — both want to show that mental states are not reducible to physical states, and that the latter's subject-matter and style is not that of a revolution in conjunction with the mental states and even with a zig-zag of anguish and exaltation that describes the relation (Lindsay) which his letters gave to Zola, who then married her: nor for a great deal of erratic handling of dates. Thus he writes of

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